SUGAR & SNAILS

a counter-sexist children's BOOKLIST

Jenny Pausacker

printed by the Women's Movement Children's Literature Co-operative Ltd.

SUGAR AND SNAILS
A COUNTERSEXIST BOOKLIST

by
Jenny Pausacker

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What are little girls made of?
What are little girls made of?
Sugar and spice and all things nice,
And that's what little girls are made of,
And that's what little girls are made of.

What are little boys made of?
What are little boys made of?
Frogs and snails and puppydogs' tails,
And that's what little boys are made of,
And that's what little boys are made of.

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INTRODUCTION

WHY CHILDREN'S BOOKS?

Among the many issues that face feminists today — the struggle for equal pay and abortion on demand, the fight to end wife-bashing and rape, the need for better childcare, learning/counselling services and women's health care — the issue of sexism in children's books can seem a bit removed from the general struggle. Women concerning themselves with children *again*. So what if all those lambs and bunnies and jolly families are sexist, when women are objectified as sex objects draped round every bottle of after shave or every washing machine in every advertisement or commercial? Isn't the reform of children's books more of a hobby than a revolutionary tactic?

This is a pretty common reaction, and makes the question, "Why children's books?", a necessary opener to a book of this kind. There are several answers.

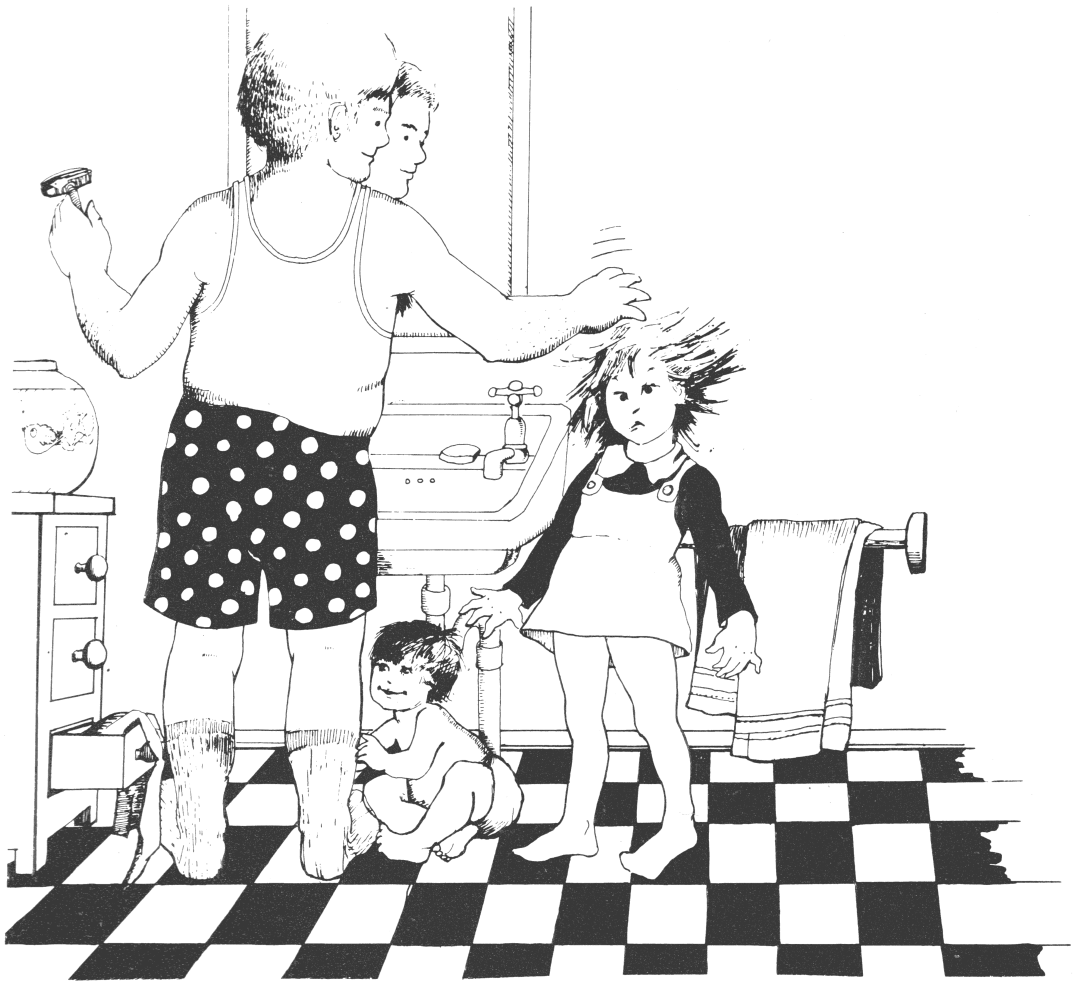
One of the reasons that adults regard children's books as trivial is because of a tendency we all have to regard children as little adults, rather than people, so that children's books are a separate category of adult literature, simplified and watered down to be made suitable for their audience. This is indeed a true enough description of many children's books, of the lambs, bunnies and jolly families school, but such writers are working from their stereotypes of what a children's book should be like. There are many books that fit into the present category of children's fiction that get away from all those stereotypes, books that any "adult" could be equally happy to read. The end result of changes within children's books will be the abolition of the category altogether.

In the mean time there is a lot to be said for working within that category. The Chinese have already produced a great amount of revolutionary children's books and comics.[1] The new feminists have had far more success in producing positive children's books than positive adult novels. The audience you are writing for in a children's book keeps a certain control on you. There is no point working to make your language so complicated that no one can understand you. You can't get away with an inadequate plot covered up by a great amount of sexual activity. Children are quite happy to admit that they prefer a good read to the latest version of the in-theme, with the result that the form of children's literature is more open to change than the present form of the adult novel.

But the final reason for concentrating on children's books is the most important. As psychological research follows the process of conditioning further and further back, almost to the moment of conception, it becomes clear that we have to act on all levels, to repair the damage done by sexist conditioning at an adult level certainly, but also to stop, or at least counter, sexist conditioning from the first moments.

> We believe that the socialization or education of children is one of the major contributors to sexism. For example, it does little good to abolish medical school quotas on women students if kindergarteners laugh at the idea of a "girl doctor" and if female high school students

[1]An English magazine, *Spare Rib*, has been running one of these as a serial over the last few months.



From Judith Crabtree's *Emily Jane and the Grumphfs*, illus. Sue O'Bryan, published by Wren.

interested in medicine are counselled into nurses' training.[1]

Children's books, school text books and the way the school curriculum is set up and carried out are all concrete examples of the socialization process. We can't have feminist inspectors travelling around to check out the basic assumptions about sex roles of all people privately involved with children — the change there has to be voluntary and from within. But we can change the institutions that reflect and shape the sexist assumptions of our society, and in doing so fight against sexism in its formative stages.

COUNTERSEXISM

A lot of really good articles have been written about the extent of sexism in children's fiction and text books. (Some of them are listed in the bibliography at the end.) Here we are taking sexism in children's books — greater representation of male characters and more positive action for them, presentation of women as passive, limited to a few careers, and so

[1]The Emma Willard Task Force. *Sexism in Education.*

on — for granted. The point can be proved: it's time to work out what we can do to change this state of affairs.

Feminist groups in England, America and Australia are writing their own children's books. (There's a special section on them in the list.) But even if you tracked them all down, a child could read them in a fortnight or so: that's part of the alternative, but not the whole. Then for parents and friends reading aloud, or for teachers with their classes there's the age old alternative of changing the pronouns — "And then the famous cowgirl lassoed the villain and . . ." — or criticizing the text — "Hands up those who think Alec D'Urbeville's a male chauvinist." A third possibility is to isolate out those books already written which present situations from a feminist perspective, whether their writers considered themselves to be feminist or not. And that's what this book list is doing.

Children's books which do not impose traditional roles on males and females have come to be known as non-sexist. We tried to find a better word. Non-sexist could mean not sexist — many books avoid sexism by default, they are not concerned with sex roles at all, even implicitly. Such books — books about the countryside, or children playing together, or animals, or football teams, with not a single sexist idea in them — are not included in the book list. The other possible meaning of non-sexist is beyond sexism, transcending sexism. There are a few books like that on the list, and it's interesting that one of the most notable, *The Enchantress from the Stars* by Sylvia Louise Engdahl, is science fiction. If the book were not set in a future society, we would expect some questioning of the woman agent Elana's capability by the people around her. Another example of non-sexism is an adult novel, *The Cook and the Carpenter* by the Carpenter, published by Daughters Inc, which uses the pronouns na and nan instead of he and she, him and her. Reading it is a good lesson in how important the sex of a character still is to us; here and now we still need to know.

Most of the books on the list are concerned with people's struggle to be seen as individuals, their struggle against labels. So I use the word countersexist to describe these books, to show that they not only do not go along with, but actively go against this society's assumptions about men and women. (I can't say that I'm sure it's the best possible word, but a month of general brainstorming couldn't produce anything better.)

In the sections that follow I shall talk about different areas where we have to examine and provide alternatives to the common assumptions. One of the basic principles of a countersexist book is that the author should give us an understanding of why the characters behave as they do. For the important thing about a stereotype is that the reader is trained to accept it at once, never asking whether mother wants to stay home and pack hampers for the happy adventurers, or why boys don't want girls in their cubby houses, or why old maids should make good villains. This is why the common objection, "Wouldn't a countersexist book just be propaganda?", is so superficial. Books that question the established cliches of our society have to have some complexity to them. Judy Bathie describes the books that the Melbourne Women's Movement Children's Literature Co-operative are writing.

> We do not wish to reverse sex-roles; rather, our aim is to ignore them. We do not want to help create moulds, we want to encourage children to develop their own personalities and potentials, rather than waste their energies trying to force themselves into stereotypes which may not suit their individual needs at all. In our stories we depict both boys

> and girls who are normally courageous, physically strong and active, mentally alert; boys and girls who hesitate, doubt and fear, who are sometimes weak and who are not afraid to cry. Our children are essentially human, and highly individualistic, instead of being a passive product of sex-role conditioning.[1]

STRONG WOMEN, AND THE CLASSICS

Out of all the ideas about countersexist children's books the idea of presenting strong women figures has got the most attention. Fair enough, obviously. That girls should find reinforcements for their intelligence, activity, curiosity, planning, working or whatever in the books they read is what we are on about, first and foremost. All these qualities in girls have been sadly underplayed, and it's time that the balance was set right. However, when it comes to picking a countersexist book, you can get the idea that a book whose heroine is a strongly presented woman is automatically in.

No one has ever tried to deny that strong women exist. The tomboy has been one of the stock characters of children's fiction always. To present a strong woman as a freak, or an honorary man with the same attitudes to other women as a man, or as someone going through a stage, is equivalent to not presenting a strong woman at all, in terms of the present discussion. One study found, "the only girls who are heroines in picture books have boy's names or are foreign princesses." Strength in a woman has to be seen as normal and natural, and as part of her total qualities. Pippi Longstocking is one of the strongest women in fiction both physically and mentally — she can lift a horse and out-argue any adult by being totally preposterous. Of course she is a comic character, but she is shown through the loving eyes of Tommy and Annika, who notice when she cries over a dead bird, or feels lonely, or helps them with something, so she is seen as part of everyday life, not set apart by her strength.

Many of the favourite characters of children's classics are strong women, remembered for the way they broke the conventions — Katy, Jo March, Anne of Green Gables, Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm, Judy of *Seven Little Australians*, Sara Crewe. Only Heidi and Pollyanna remain to represent the sunshine side, while a thousand pious heroines have disappeared without a trace. And yet something always happens to these strong women before they can fulfil their promise. Judy is actually killed. Headstrong Katy falls from the swing and gets disciplined by the School of Pain, a nauseating concept which turns up again in Louisa May Alcott's *Jack and Jill*, where Jill starts off as a romping Alcott heroine, but gets roped into the School of Pain after a toboggan accident. Heroines who aren't made to suffer directly are controlled through the people close to them. Anne Shirley and Rebecca are both about to take up good educational positions when a family crisis demands them at home — end of career. Jo is not cut down to size quite so much, but we would have wished her something better than being matron to Jo's boys. The moral is plain: strong women are fine, but they mustn't get out of hand. Only the fantasy heroines — Alice, Dorothy of Oz fame, Irene from *The Princess and the Goblin* — manage to keep some control over events. Time and again the classics bring us pictures of strong women, living breathing indi-

[1] *Education News*, October 1974.

viduals with exciting independent lives, only to take the picture away before we have looked quite long enough.

WOMEN VILLAINS

Lots of women all through their childhoods have identified with the witch rather than the princess, with Madame X rather than Superspy's blonde girlfriend. Women villains to a lot of us have been the epitome of how you can be dashing and resourceful and in charge of events — as long as you are prepared to come to a sticky end. We reject this concept of women. Our *heroines* are going to be dashing, resourceful and in charge of events. (It's noticeable how witches themselves have been working their way into the company of unsung heroines of the Women's Movement.)

This doesn't mean that the idea of a woman villain is in itself sexist. We don't have to say all women are perfect in order to stop the oppression of women. We have to know that a woman can be over-controlling or bossy before we can ask the reasons why. "A little understanding — of her problem, her frustration at not being allowed to play an equal role in her family or her world, and her consequent misuse of energy to project her ideas and ego through the lives of others — is long overdue."[1] Villains are usually without background, existing only to make the lives of the good and innocent more exciting. In *Come by Here*, Olivia Coolidge gives us a woman who is really sadistic to the powerless Minty — but also shows us why.

> Helen Robbins was a woman who would have been happy in an exacting professional career. Uneducated, confined to domestic work and married to a husband with a tenth of her gifts, she had gone sour with age, she had developed a stream of cruelty which satisfied a thwarted love of power. (169)

And we really appreciate Helen as a person, though an unpleasant one, not just as a force acting on Minty.

CAREERS

Women tend to be cast as this domestic kind of villain, rather than as spies, kidnappers or bank robbers, understandably, because home is where most women are seen. And the women in children's books who aren't seen as destroying their children's lives fall into the background, statues in aprons at the kitchen sink, occasionally giving bits of consolation or good advice. Looking at the minor characters is a good way to tell how sexist a book is. Does the horse riding heroine notice who's paying for the horse, and who makes her bed while she's off on her early morning ride? So many women are totally involved in running a household that it is vitally important that fictional mothers be shown as people in their own right, not just as backstops and mainstays. There are some remarkable women in the books listed here — Mrs Brown in *National Velvet*, the woman in Ivor Cutlor's picture book *Meal One* — but there are a million uncharacterised "mothers" in books not listed here.

Work outside the home is similarly, perhaps more notably, neglected. At least you can see that mothers exist: it would be hard to realise from fiction that they can also hold jobs. A career, in children's fiction, is

[1]Feminists on Children's Media. "A Feminist Look at Children's Books." *Library Journal*, January 1971.

usually something that is too far ahead for a girl to think of, and too far behind for a woman to think of. The classic ending to a story of young ambition is, for a boy, to achieve something he's striven for; for a girl, to get married. When women work, it tends to be in sex segregated careers. The old favourite career novels never went in for *Elizabeth is an Engineer* or *Frances works in a Factory*, but stuck to a standard list — nursing, teaching, floristry, hairdressing, journalism, and medicine is also okay for some reason. Times haven't changed much either. There's a line that goes, "Don't show women in jobs women don't usually do, because that's encouraging unreal expectations." But unreal expectations are what we are on about. A book like *Firegirl* from the Feminist Press shows Brenda refusing to accept that women can't be firemen. In order that prejudices may be broken down, there must be individuals in every field prepared to fight for their ambitions, and they need all the reinforcement they can get.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH PARENTS

Any book that shows a relationship between children and parents that is individual and complex is on its way to being countersexist. A further step is showing a relationship between the parents. So many books accept the idea of married adults as mere child producers: both parents relate to the children, but the reader has no idea of how they might feel about each other. This is carried on in the way an author will name adult characters by their relationship to the child character, so that we have Mother, rather than Sarah who is John's mother, and Betty's grandmother is called Granny by the author too. All these situations come from the traditional nuclear family, but as All of Us, a feminist publishing group, write:

> The two-parent nuclear structure is not as prevalent as current literature would have us believe. Other family structures which are underrepresented in children's literature are one-parent families (the parent being either male or female), families where both parents are of the same sex, families with five or more children, extended families with grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc, parents or parent with adopted, foster, or physically or mentally handicapped children, and communal families. Interracial and intercultural families need representation.
> . . . Apartment dwelling, big city living and farm living are all environments where various family structures do reside. Stories about children who live part-time with their mother and part-time with their father are desperately needed. Stories depicting families moving from one situation to another geographically and/or emotionally are needed as our society becomes more mobile every year. Especially lacking are stories where one or both parents are in prison or unemployed. Children need to retain respect and love for these parents as they face the struggles and hardships this society deals out.

We don't want a whole series of "problem novels" about situations like these. To label something a problem is to place it in advance. The situation shown need not be the main focus of the story, but can simply be a part of it, introduced casually rather than painstakingly. But it is vital that readers do not continue with this schizophrenia between the norm presented through fiction and their own lives. Enid Blyton's parents separated when she was young; she herself later divorced her first husband and

remarried. One book in all the hundreds she wrote touches on the subject of separated parents.

Among all the alternatives it is important to give children the choice of who they live with and who they relate to primarily. Nina Bawden's *The Runaway Summer* and Dorothy Canfield's *Betsy* both show a choice of this kind, and Maria Gripe's *The Night Daddy* puts the question even more clearly. Julia's unmarried mother does night shift, so a young man comes in as baby sitter. Julia calls him her night daddy, but she can't convince her school friends that this is a perfectly reasonable kind of father to have. "Families" don't have to be the people you were born with; they can be people you choose — which of course gives a radically new meaning to the word.

MEN

Once you start reading intensively it's amazing how many overt statements there are in children's books about the natural hostility of boys to girls. So simple ordinary friendship between the sexes is in fact one of the criteria for countersexist fiction, though it helps if the writer is also aware of the difficulties such a friendship faces.

> Ken and Toby didn't believe in talking to girls. Of course it was all right to make comments at girls particularly if they were insults, but real conversations were out, at least in public places.[1]

Erica in Joan Clarke's *Early Rising* is faced with a different set of barriers to friendship. She has always been a part of the boys' games, but there comes a time when

> Suddenly she realised she was alone in a ring of giggling red-faced boys, and that the jokes were directed at her. (166)

Friendship between boys and girls is something that becomes more and more difficult with every year.

Robin Morgan writes, "I know why you hate strong women, fear gentle men." These two concepts go together in changing our ideas of what men and women are like. Women must recognize their strengths, men their capacity for feeling. But the poem sums up society's reaction well. Strong women may be hated as upstarts, but gentle men are feared far more deeply as class traitors, denying their own privileges and forcing other men to question themselves. We decided to include books with boys as main characters on the booklist, but in fact there aren't many. Partly because men haven't written much in the way of personal accounts of how sexism affects them, so there aren't such detailed guidelines as the feminist movement has provided for analysing the conditioning of women. Partly because literature reinforces the idea that the aim of every boy is to be a real man even more strongly than the idea that the aim of every girl is to be a real woman. I started with books that showed boys exploring their own strengths and weaknesses — Richard Church's *The Cave*, Ivan Southall, though with advance reservations — but the moral always was that even boys who seem weak or unsuitable have a chance to prove themselves real men in times of crisis.

The most common there I came up with among countersexist books

[1]Snyder, Zilpha Keatley. *The Egypt Game*. New York, Atheneum, 1968, p.114.

about boys was that of boys overcoming the need to play it cool, and reconciling themselves to their own feelings. E. L. Konigsberg's *The Dragon in the Ghetto Caper*, Zilpha Keatley Snyder's *The Headless Cupid*, Maia Wojciechowska's *"Don't play dead before you have to"*, all show young men first earnestly trying to play it cool, finding they can't, and then deciding that it's a better thing not to be able to. A start is being made. But the gentle man is going to be a very hard subject for people to write about and read about for some time yet.

SEX

Everyone knows that the way sex is dealt with in children's books is dead hopeless, but no one is quite brave enough to do anything about it. So if anyone who qualifies as a child wants to read about that sort of thing, let them read adult novels, or go out and get their own experience. The permissive society has resulted in a few problem novels here and there, where the initial sexual experience usually takes place off stage and the novel concentrates relentlessly on the terrible social consequences. Josephine Kamm's *Young Mother*[1], concentrating relentlessly on Pat's pregnant and unmarried state, the result of a one night stand aimed at keeping up with the peer group, compares badly to Winifred Madison's *Growing up in a hurry*, where Karen's relationship to Steve Nakamura is the subject of the story, her delaying tactics about contraception part of her whole attitude to life, and her abortion a result of this.

[1]Kamm, Josephine *Young Mother*, London, Brockhampton, 1965.

From Judith Bathie's *The Witch of Grange Grove*, illus. Isabel Wicca published by the Women's Movement Children's Literature Co-operative.

There are books on the list which do approach sex with some sort of openness, at least to the extent of assuming it will cross the characters' minds from time to time. But there would be less than a dozen titles, and that in a time when the guardians of children's literature are well away, screaming about the morbid concentration on divorce, abortion, pregnancy, homosexuality. The last area's a really good one to take a look at. The nearest you'll get to a book dealing with homosexual relationships in this booklist, apart from a lesbian version of *Sleeping Beauty* by some American feminists which sticks a bit too closely to the original, is *The Getting of Wisdom*, with Laura's feelings for Evelyn. This is not because we feel homosexuality to be antisocial or counter-revolutionary, but because I could find no books at all that dealt honestly with lesbianism, and only three that dealt with male homosexuality, all of which were terrible. John Donovan's *I'll get there. It better be worth the trip*[1] is widely acclaimed as a sensitive novel about homosexuality — one can only assume its sensitivity lies in not subjecting the critics to more than they can cope with, for the homosexuality consists of two boys drinking a bottle of whiskey and falling asleep with their arms round each other, at which one freaks out and the other doesn't. In *The Man without a Face*[2], Charles actually sleeps with his tutor, who immediately dies of a heart attack, killed, it seems obvious, by his author, to prevent it from happening again. Liberal tolerance, as opposed to actual openness, goes only so far.

So we say that we want sexual feelings to be recognized as part of the experience that children's books should rightly be dealing with. And when that happens, we don't want the old stereotypes to turn up again. We don't want sex to be the one area where women are never allowed to be strong. We want to see alternatives to the really oppressive dating scene presented, and we want to see more criticisms of the dating scene, such as Paul Zindel makes in *My Darling, My Hamburger*. We want to see alternatives to the norm, differences in age, class or race, homosexuality, shown as valid, not as problems, and we want the right to stay out of sexual relationships to be seen as valid too. Above all we want equality to be seen as just as important in personal relationships as it is in social ones. Attitudes about sex can be the most sexist of all. Catherine Storr's *Marianne Dreams* is a fantasy about a strong girl who controls the magic forces and helps Mark get back his interest in life. In a sequel, *Marianne and Mark*, set in the "real" world, Marianne is making a mess of her first experiences of going out with boys, when along comes Mark, who tells her she's a little silly and wins her gratitude. Equal relationships between the sexes are even harder to find once dating begins. One book that does show such a relationship is *The Tree* by Joan Tate, and it's interesting to notice that David, due to a childhood in institutions, can't talk to people easily — he is a disadvantaged male.

CATEGORIES OF CHILDREN'S BOOKS

There are certain categories of children's books that rate some separate comments. Animal books might be supposed to be beyond the range of sexism, but aren't. Dr Seuss so wants his characters to be male that he

[1]Donovan, John. *I'll get there. It better be worth the trip*, London, Macdonald, 1969.
[2]Holland, Isabelle. *The Man without a face*, Toronto, Bantam, 1973.

even gives us a male hen. In general animals tend to be given human characteristics, which means that the stereotypes can grow even larger than life, because what would be exaggerated behaviour in a human can seem comic in an animal. It is important that books about animals take the known characteristics of that animal as their starting point. This cuts both ways — no male hens, but no egg-hatching roosters. But never mind — the male penguin hatches the eggs.

Historical novels raise the same question of respecting the facts. To put twentieth century expressions into the mouth of an eighteenth century person is a waste of time. There are valuable lessons to be learned from looking at the past as it was — characters may try to see something more than their social setting allows, but if they see too much too easily, then the lesson — that your social setting limits what you can see — is lost. The issue of marriage is an interesting one. The Feminists on Children's Media criticized *The Witch of Blackbird Pond* as resolving finally into a question of who Kit should marry, but to some extent Kit's attraction to Nat was because of his roving life, a life she simply couldn't have led any other

From Jenny Pausacker's *The Three Dragons*, illus. Rae Dale, published by Wren.

way. Barbara Ker Wilson's *The Lovely Summer* presents a neat compromise — the two heroines marry, but minor characters choose purposeful single lives — but a novel like K. M. Peyton's *The Maplin Bird*, where Emily sets up house with her brother, knowing a relationship with Adam would only compromise her own sense of herself, is still a rare find.
A third category which has been much debated is the fairy tale. Feminists have re-written a number of traditional fairy tales, which has been questioned as tampering with our heritage. But in fact fairy tales have been constantly re-written. The Victorians did them over, putting in morals wherever possible. Twentieth century writers are at the moment taking them out, and bringing back some of the original violence. It's up to the individual re-teller whether Red Riding Hood's granny was eaten by the wolf, eaten but brought back to life, or hiding in the cupboard all the time. So why shouldn't we also decide whether she and Red Riding Hood were rescued by the woodcutter, or whether they tricked the wolf themselves? Obviously some stories are easier to work on than others, and to make re-writing fairy tales compulsory would be literary dictatorship. But there's no reason to consider them sacrosanct, and no reason why they shouldn't be crticised.

VALUES

In the previous sections I have talked about a number of different touchstones for a countersexist children's book. There are other values which relate to the fight against sex role conditioning. For instance, it would not be good enough to write a book about an intelligent driving female capitalist; or to write books which didn't discriminate against women, but discriminated against other minority groups, old people, migrants, blacks, instead — a sort of WASP feminism; or to write a countersexist animal book that ignored ecological principals. It is part of the struggle against sexism that we work against competitiveness and the desire for money and status, and encourage collective effort and non-violence, the value of constructive work whether high or low paid.
Ironically this booklist is substantially the work of one person, the result of a salary grant from the Schools Commission, but the ideology behind it has been worked out by the Women's Movement Children's Literature Co-operative over the three years we have been together, and the old cliche, "without whom this book would never have been written" is very true in this case. I first came along to the group two years ago, and twenty books, four posters and countless interviews, articles and speaking engagements later, I think we've achieved a fair bit, and also done each other a lot of good. What is important is that we keep moving on to new things, and for that reason I don't see the booklist as finished. There will be books on this list that other people think are really sexist. There will also be a lot of countersexist books that aren't on the list. So if you want to recommend or criticize, write to me care of the Women's Centre, 50 Little LaTrobe Street, Melbourne, and your suggestions will be there for the next edition of the booklist, which obviously isn't even in the planning stages yet, but is the necessary next step. And if any women are interested in working with the group in any other way, phone the Centre — 347 1564 — and check up on our meeting times. You'll be very welcome.

FICTION

The fiction books are divided into four age groupings. Group 1 contains the picture books, group 2 easy reading books, group 3 the main bulk of children's fiction, and group 4 books for people who are moving on towards adult fiction. I haven't given the different groups any labels or age ranges because it seems to me that people's interests and reading ability and interests differ a lot, so that to say this is a book for a five year old is pretty meaningless. But I have divided the books into rough groupings so that readers can tell which books are on roughly the same level. Paperbacks are marked PB.

FICTION 1

Ardizonne, Edward. *Diana and her Rhinoceros.* London, Bodley Head, 1964.
When a rhinoceros walks into the house, Diana's parents are terrified, but Diana cures its influenza and refuses to let the zoo take it away. Incidentally, Diana grows old and leads a full happy life without ever marrying.

Blech, Dietland. *Hello, Irina.* London, Longman Young, 1970.
Irina is an old pony who decides to travel to France and find the wild white horses.

Bonsall, Crosby. *The Case of the Scaredy Cats.* Tadworth, World's Work, 1973.
A gang of girls stages a sit-in outside a cubby house with the sign, "No girls allowed", and win the fight that follows. This is the sex war as an ongoing struggle: the boys heave a sigh of relief and hope the girls never come back, but the last picture shows "Girls are still as good as boys" written across the snow.

Burton, Virginia Lee. *Katy and the Big Snow.* London, Faber, 1957.
Katy is a big strong caterpillar tractor who likes work, the tougher the better.
Also, *The Little House*, the "her-story" of a house.

Byars, Betty. *Go and Hush the Baby.* New York, Viking, 1971.
Ben has to go and hush the baby while his mother is first painting, then cooking. Though he acts reluctant, in fact he is quite disappointed when the baby finally hushes.

Clark, Ann Nolan. *Tia Maria's Garden.* New York, Viking, 1963.

Tia Maria
does not like fences.
They keep things in,
too much.
They keep things out,
too much.

So she and the small boy walk in the desert and then return to the house where they live.

From Jan Harper's *What Parents Do*, illus. Vicki Nelson, published by Wren.

Conford, Ellen. *Just the thing for Geraldine*. Boston, Little, Brown, 1974.
Geraldine's possum parents send her to learn ballet, weaving and sculpture. She fails at each of them, but all the time she has been able to juggle without ever being taught.

Cutlor, Ivor. *Meal One*. London, Heinemann, 1971.
Helbert has one of the most amazing mothers in fiction. They play football together, fight, dig holes, on a rough and tumble equality. *Meal One* is about what happens when they plant a plum stone in the floorboards and it goes wild.

Falk, Ann Mari. *Matthew comes to Town*. trans. Marianne Helwig. London, Burke Read for Fun series, 1971.
Matthew comes to visit Eva, and they travel around town together. A relaxed equal friendship.
This book, and the books by David Mackay, Terry Reid and Helen Solomon in this section, are all taken from series of school readers. They are quite as attractively produced, and much cheaper, than the usual run of commercial books, which makes them a good way of beating the mark up. You can buy them all separately from C. T. Oldmeadow, educational suppliers — ring 459 5377, find out the price and send a cheque, or the address is 8 Beatrice Avenue, West Heidelberg, if you want to go out and have a look around.

Fox, Dorothea Warren. *Miss Twiggley's Tree*. New York, Parent's Magazine Press, 1966.
Miss Twiggley lives in a tree with a dog named Puss — he does the washing up and shopping, while she swings from ropes and has bears to call, keeping her hat on all the time. When the town is flooded, she saves everyone in her tree house, and learns to get on with people too.

Gaeddert, Lou Ann. *Noisy Nancy Norris*. New York, Doubleday, 1965.
Nancy makes a lot of interesting noises in her day's activities, until the landlady, Mrs Muffle, finds it a bit much to take. But Mrs Muffle isn't a villain: after a few days' silence she writes to Nancy begging her for "just a little noise so I'll know you're all right." (61)
Harper, Anita. *Mummy runs a cafe*. London, Blackie, 1973.
Part of a series where children learn about their parents' jobs. "Mummy" is the manager, the cook is a man. When Tom asks why she works, she explains, " 'To earn the money to buy all the things we need.' " She is working for basics, not just extras.

Heymans, Margriet. *The Shy Pony*. London, Longmans Young, 1972.
Jenny gives the shy pony courage, and they organize a circus and travel around meeting interesting people.

Hoban, Lillian. *Arthur's Christmas Cookies*. Tadworth, World's Work, 1973.
When Arthur finds that his cookie recipe has turned out as play clay, he first cries, then decides he has made Christmas ornaments. It's nice to see a male in the kitchen, even if he is a chimpanzee, and "when they were done, they all helped clean up the kitchen." (63)

Hoban, Russell. *Best Friends for Frances*. London, Faber, 1971.

When Albert and Harold have a no-girl baseball game, Frances organizes a no-boy picnic. Albert wants to come. " 'Well, I'm not sure,' said Frances. 'Maybe you'll be best friends when it's goodies-in-the-hamper time, but how about when it's no-girls-baseball time?' " But Albert has got the message, and they stay friends.
Also, *A Baby Sister for Frances, Bedtime for Frances, A Birthday for Frances.*

Horvath, Betty. *Small Paul and the Bully of Morgan Court.* Melbourne, Cheshire, 1971.
Paul comes from a tall family, but he only gets worried about being small when the bully starts in on him. His mother explains the pecking order to him, and finally he is able to help Willie deal with the people who pick on him. It's not always that easy to deal with bullies, but the point is made that understanding can be more useful than size. Italian family.

Hughes, Richard. *Gertrude and the Mermaid.* London, Harlin Quist, 1968.
A complex mysterious story about a mermaid, a girl and Gertrude, the wooden doll who belongs to both in turn and is alternately loved and mistreated by them. In the end Gertrude opts out. " 'I'm tired of being anybody's doll, and from now on, I'm going to belong only to myself.' " You'd either find it pointless or fascinating.
Also, *Gertrude's Child*, where Gertrude gets a child of her own to treat like a doll, until she decides, " 'You won't belong to me and I won't belong to you — not neither. So now let us start on our travels!' "

Kantrowitz, Mildred. *Maxie.* London, Bodley Head, 1970.
Maxie is old and alone, living a life of perfect routine until the morning she decides not to get up and discovers four hundred people depend on her for the time. The story gives dignity to a familiar figure in our society — though it would be nice to feel that some of the four hundred were going to visit her now and again in future.

Kerr, Judith. *The Tiger who Came to Tea.* London, Collins Picture Lions, 1968. PB.
When a tiger comes to tea unexpectedly, Sophie is delighted, and follows him round while he eats up everything in sight.
Leaf, Monro. *Ferdinand.* London, Hamish Hamilton, 1937.
The classic story of the bull who wouldn't fight, but just wanted to sit and smell the flowers. Susan Clark says the story "affirms a desire in all males to sit down and enjoy life instead of worrying about preserving their machismo."

Lingaren, Astrid. *Of Course Polly Can Ride a Bike.* Chicago, Foller, 1972.
Polly doesn't get a bike for her birthday as she planned, but she is a sticker, and proves in the end that of course Polly can ride a bike.

Lippman, Peter. *Busy Wheels.* London, Collins Picture Lions, 1973. PB.
Without any special point being made about it, buses, trucks, dumper lorries and road rollers, as well as cars full of kiddies have women drivers.

McGinley, Phyllis. *How Mrs Santa Claus Saved Christmas.* Tadworth, World's Work, 1963.
Mrs Claus cooks Santa's meals, keeps him comfortable and gives him his

ideas. One Christmas she has an idea he doesn't like, so when he sleeps in she goes herself, to take

Skis for the bookworm,
Books to read
On rainy Sundays
For the Sporting Breed.
For girls who had nothing but dolls on hand
Nice red tip-trucks for dumping sand;
Nice soft Pandas, huggable and fat,
For little boys waiting
For a cowboy hat.

Santa is furious, but everyone thanks her for the deepest wish of their heart. A perfect fable of how people don't really like their roles — and Mrs Claus is so tired, Santa has to get supper.

Mackay, David. *Helping*. London, Longman, 1973. Breakthrough readers. PB.
Mum is a nurse and when she is on night duty dad collects the boy from school and they make tea and wash and tidy up. Nice details — dad isn't the only man waiting at the school gate, mum seems from the drawings to be Indian.
Breakthrough readers are sold in sets of four. *Helping* comes from yellow set E, and the others in the set are quite harmless. However some of the other readers are really sexist. *My mum*, of which David Mackay is a co-author, presents the woman as a zombie figure, passively waiting on husband, child, baby. You can get *Helping* from Oldmeadows — look back to Ann Mari Falk's *Matthew comes to Town* for details.

McKee, David. *The Man who was going to Mind the House*. New York, Abelard-Schumann, 1972.
A re-telling of the old folk story about the man and woman who argue over whose work is harder and swap for a day. The woman copes quite well in the fields, but the man can't co-ordinate housework at all.

Maclean, Muriel. *Mags*. Melbourne, Cheshire, 1973.
Peggy, staying with her aunts, is pining for someone to play with, and Greataunt Margaret changes into Mags and plays with her till the aunts come home. "Are you really Mags?" Peggy asks afterwards, and Greataunt Margaret replies, " 'Of course I am. Always was and always will be.' "
(28) Overcoming the age barrier.

Madian, Jon. *Two is a Line*. New York, Platt and Munk, 1971.
Children in a playground discover that the way to avoid quarrels is to queue for your turn. Boys and girls are equally active and aggressive.

Mahy, Margaret. *The Man whose Mother was a Pirate*. London, Dent, 1972.
The little man pushes his pirate mother to the sea in a wheelbarrow. Various people try to dissuade him, but he believes his mother's poetry and carries on. Mother is fat, tough, colourful, with a pipe in her mouth, the little man is timid and conventional, but open to change. A good book for kids starting to think that boys are strong and girls are weak.

Merriam, Eve. *Mommies at Work.* New York, Scholastic, 1971. PB.
"All kinds of mommies at all kinds of jobs", from atom-splitting mommies to assembly line mommies. This and Robert Stewart's *Daddy Book* would make a good pair.

Ness, Evaline. *Do you have the time, Lydia?* London, Bodley Head, 1971.
Lydia lives with her father and brother in the tropics. "Every day Lydia was busy painting pictures, reading books, hammering nails, gathering shells, sewing clothes and baking cakes. Lydia was so busy doing so *many* things she never finished *any* thing." For once we have a girl so active that she has to learn to slow down.
Also, *Exactly Alike* (Oliver and Boyd, 1964). Elizabeth's four look-alike brothers make her life miserable with their noise and general unco-operativeness. They come to terms by a series of really imaginative tactics on her part. How to control your life by working *with* other people.

Papas. *Theodore, the mouse who wanted to own a frying pan.* London, O.U.P., 1970.
Theodore wants a frying pan, but gets led into accelerating consumerism. The final scene, with all the machines crying adjust me, dust me, clean me, is a housewife's nightmare shown through a male mouse. Uses comic strip form effectively.

Phleger, Frederick. *Ann can Fly.* New York, Random House, 1959. A Dr Seuss book.
Ann, on a flying trip with her father, is taken very seriously — given full information and a chance to pilot the plane. Dated illustrations.

Priz, Rene. *Pallina and her wondrous Grandmothers.* New York, Platt and Munk, 1964.
Pallina's great-great-great-great-grandmother was a knight, her great grandmother was a ship's captain, her grandmother was a bicyclist. Pallina tells their stories to make her own points.

Reid, Terry. *Peg-leg Meg.* London, Macmillan, 1974. Language in Action series. PB.
Meg has a peg leg and a clay pipe and an eye patch. The book goes through a zany list of her animals, ending with them all tucked up in her more than double bed.
Another reader — see the note on Ann Mari Falk's *Matthew comes to Town.*

Rockwell, Harlow. *My Doctor.* London, Hamish Hamilton, 1973.
A boy goes to the doctor for a check up: that she is a woman is taken for granted.

Schick, Eleanor. *Making Friends.* London, Macmillan, 1969.
No words, just a small boy making friends with humans and animals on his way to the playground. He and his mother are neither detached nor possessive, and mother greets her friend at the playground as happily as the boy greets his friend, a young girl.

Selsam, Millicent E. *The Bug that laid the Golden Eggs.* Tadworth, World's Work, 1969.
Millie (the author) and a group of five girls and four boys try to find what insect laid the golden eggs, girls and boys taking an equal part. Best of all they don't succeed, but will have to wait till next spring — a realistic investigation. But in the rest of the series of which this is part boys dominate, and the one girl hero is dogged by a knowall guy who is always one step ahead.

Sharmat, Margorie Weinman. *Gladys told me to meet her here.* New York, Harper and Row, 1970.
Irving re-lives his friendship with Gladys. "The first time I ever saw Gladys she stuck out her tongue at me. I knew right away she liked me because she stayed around to see what I would do." (9) A good equal friendship — and when they play hospital Gladys is the doctor, Irving the nurse.

Shulevitz, Uri. *Rain Rain Rivers.* New York, Farrar, 1969.
Little girls are just as capable of making a creative mess on rainy days.

Solomon, Helen. *Thumbs Up.* London, Macmillan, 1974. Language in Action series. PB.
Grandfather and Tom hit their thumbs working on the go-cart, so Gran puts down her knitting and "hums and bangs and knocks and thumps" and finishes it off for them. A comic triumph. Another reader — see note on Ann Mari Falk's *Matthew comes to town.*

Stewart, Robert. *The Daddy Book.* Glasgow, Collins, 1973.
Intentionally countersexist — Stewart writes, "It has occurred to me that with more and more daddies spending more and more time with their children (and more mummies going to work) it might be fitting for daddies to have a book of their own . . . Perhaps daddies have been too mysterious to their children in the past." And the book is packed with all kinds of men in close contact with boys and girls. It's not perfect — for instance, all the jobs mentioned are very "male" jobs — but it's a good start.

Thayer, Jane. *Quiet on account of Dinasour.* Tadworth, World's Work, 1965.
"What Mary Ann liked best in school was studying dinasours", so when she finds one she knows exactly what to do. "And when Mary Ann grew up, what do you think she did? Why, she became a famous scientist, of course . . ." (Unfortunately the illustrator had decided that of course all professional women have glasses and their hair in a bun.)

Thompson, Kay. *Eloise.* New York, Simon and Schuster, 1955.
"A book for precocious grown ups", about a tough young girl and her methods of creating havoc and amusing herself in the Plaza Hotel where she lives with her nanny.

Ungerer, Tomi. *Zerelda's Ogre.* New York, Harper & Row, 1967. Also PB, Puffin.
Some people dislike the book because its main focus is a female cooking, but Zerelda's cooking is an art and does not diminish women. She controls the ogre with it, and though she marries him this is not till years later.

Williams, Jay. *The Practical Princess.* New York, Parents' Magazine Press 1969.
Princess Bedelia saves the kingdom from a dragon and rescues a prince, all through her common sense. A lovely send up of traditional fairy tales — when the dragon wants a princess, Bedelia says, " 'Dragons can't tell the difference between princesses and anyone else. Use your common sense. He's just asking for me because he's a snob.' "
Also, *Stupid Marco, The Youngest Captain.*

Wolde, Gunilla. *Thomas bakes a Cake.* Leicester, Brockhampton, 1974.
One of a good series. When *Thomas tidies his Room,* he has a Susie doll among his toys. When *Thomas goes to the Doctor,* she is a woman doctor. When *Thomas and Sarah dress up,* they both start from t-shirts and shorts, and add skirts, men's shirts, big shoes and handbags. When *Thomas bakes a Cake,* his father gets it out of the oven for him.

Wood, Joyce. *Grandmother Lucy in her Garden.* London, Collins, 1972.
The understanding between old woman and girl is nice, but nicest of all is that Grandmother Lucy has her own name, that she is not just generalised into "Granny".
Also, *Grandmother Lucy's Birthday.*

FICTION 2

Baxter, Gillian. *Special Delivery*. London, Methuen, 1967.
When their friend has an accident, Simon, Sarah and Margaret try to help out with his delivery round and get mixed up with thieves. The twins are very confident: Margaret is timid, but in a crisis finds out she can do all sorts of things she is used to believing she can't.

Berg, Leila. *A Box for Benny*. Leicester, Brockhampton, 1958.
In the process of getting a shoebox for the springtime games in Fern Street, Benny minds a baby, feels fear, admires tough Becky and understands that, "(Boys) were often pleased not to be able to come to school . . . (Girls) hated being kept from school, because at home they always had to do the scrubbing and the washing and the looking after the children, and didn't have any fun. So learning was a treat for them." (69)

Carroll, Lewis. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass*. Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1962. PB.
Alice keeps her grip on the most impossible situations and a series of benevolent women tyrants — the Queen of Hearts, the Duchess, the Red Queen — loom over the action.

Clewes, Dorothy. *The Runaway*. London, Hamish Hamilton, 1968. An Antelope Book.
Penny starts to run away from their new house, but has to deliver a letter to the ferocious Colonel Masters. Her new friend Maxwell admits he is afraid, and gets courage from Penny. She finds she has made new friends already and decides to stay.

Coatsworth, Elizabeth. *The Princess and the Lion*. London, Hamish Hamilton, 1971. An Antelope Book.
In Abyssinia Mariam and her family are just about to rescue her brother from the Prison of the Princes where all the heirs to the throne are kept to avoid civil war, when they hear that Michael has been named the king's successor, so Mariam sets out with the palace lion to stop Michael's escape. The king chose Michael from watching Mariam around the palace. "If a girl were brave and gentle, would not her brother be brave and gentle also?" (36)

Dagleish, Alice. *The Courage of Sarah Noble*. London, Hamish Hamilton, 1970.
Pioneering with her father ahead of the family, Sarah keeps herself going with the formula, "Keep your courage up, Sarah Noble." Courage isn't easy, but something to work for. Not so good about Indians.

Enright, Elizabeth. *Zeee*. London, Heinemann, 1965.
"Zeee was a bad fairy and proud of it. She lived alone, and always had. She had no mother, father, sisters, brothers, uncles, aunts, or cousins and never had had any. About a hundred years before this story begins, she had invented herself by magic." (7)

Farmer, Penelope. *The Seagull.* London, Hamish Hamilton, 1960. An Antelope Book.
Stephen saves a wounded seagull and wants to own it, but his grandmother helps to show him he can't possess everything. In *Dragonfly Summer* Stephen is again trying to stake claims of ownership, this time against his cousin Peter, who is also staying at Mill House. Even when Peter cries, Stephen is just angry because it means he can't hit him. But fortunately he realises what he is doing again.

Holman, Felice. *Elisabeth the Treasure Hunter.* New York, Macmillan, 1963.
Elisabeth learns about seashore life through a treasure hunt along the beach. She is active and independent. " 'All right now,' Papa called, 'let's each of us look around and see what he can see.' 'I'm not "he",' complained Elisabeth." (25) Also, *Elisabeth the Bird Watcher.*

Holman, Felice. *Silently, the Cat, and Miss Theodosia.* New York, Macmillan, 1964.
Miss Theodosia's life is so full of decisions — she is crocheting the world's largest afghan rug, has to dust all her father's money, and is learning all the proverbs and maxims of the world — that she never gets out during the day. But at night she goes adventuring on her Irish mail push bike.
Also, *The Witch on the Corner* (London, Lutterworth, 1967), about another recluse and the way she is feared for being "different".
Lindgren, Astrid. *Pippi Longstocking.* London, O.U.P., 1957. PB.
Pippi is a superchild. "She was *so* strong that in all the world there was no policeman as strong as she. She could have lifted a whole horse if she had wanted to. And there were times when she *did* want to." (3) Her ideas are as important as her actions. " 'Exactly,' said Pippi, 'it's definitely best for little children to have a regular life, especially if they can regulate it themselves.' " (*Pipi goes aboard*, p. 88) Unfortunately her friends Tommy and Annika are shown as very stereotyped girl and boy.
Also, *Pippi in the South Seas*

McNeill, Janet. *A Fairy called Andy Perks.* London, Hamish Hamilton, 1973. An Antelope Book.
Andy gets stuck with a fairy dress for the fancy dress party. "You didn't think of Andy as a Fairy. You thought of her racing all the other girls in the playground, and climbing even higher up the trees than some of the boys could climb; Andy Perks collected snails while other girls were playing dolls and tea parties, she was bottom of the needlework class and top in spelling." (11-12)

Merrill, Jean. *Maria's House.* New York, Atheneum, 1974.
Maria's mother works at the Overnight Laundry so Maria can take art lessons at the Museum, because she believes in Maria as an artist. When the teacher, Miss Lindstrom, wants a picture of her house, Maria draws two, one of an elegant mansion and one of the tenement where she lives. " 'It's nice art should be beautiful,' Mama said. 'But it should also be true.' " (3) She helps Maria feel pride in herself.

Oldfield, Pamela. *Melanie Brown goes to School.* London, Faber, 1970.
Melanie Brown is self-willed and vain, but cheery, so that although she is always getting into trouble thing usually turn out all right. A good contrast

to the nice little girl image, without being typeable as a tomboy. Also, *Melanie Brown climbs a Tree.*

Rongen, Bjorn. *Anna of the Bears.* London, Methuen, 1965. 'Pied Piper Books.
When Kurt the Hunter takes a bear cub from its mother, the bear takes Anna in return. Anna's mother is the main person in her rescue.

Slobodkin, Florence and Louis. *Sarah Somebody.* New York, Vanguard, 1969.
Sarah gets a chance to learn reading and writing at a time when only boys had been sent to school in the Polish-Jewish community. She becomes a "somebody", and begins to help other people — Luba, who can't afford a seat by the fire, and her grandmother, who sees her own name, Ruth, written before she dies.

Storr, Catherine. *Clever Polly and the Stupid Wolf.* Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1968. PB.
The wolf keeps trying to catch and eat Polly, who constantly outwits him.
Also, *Polly and the Wolf Again.*

Storr, Catherine. *Puss and Cat.* London, Faber, 1969.
Puss and Cat are identical twins, athletic, speedy, inquiring. For a long time they do everything together, so when they try to be separate human beings they find it hard to get people to see them that way.
Also, *Lucy* (London, Bodley Head, 1961. Acorn Library.) and its sequel, *Lucy Runs Away,* about a girl who prefers to play detective and dress as a cowboy rather than play dolls and dress in a skirt. Other women are not put down for their choices, but Lucy doesn't succeed in changing the stereotypes around her.

Sykes, Pamela. *Emma's Afternoon.* London, Bodley Head, 1970. Acorn Library.
Emma, convalescing, goes for an afternoon walk where she faces up to a dog, climbs a tree, rescues her doll from the stream, and has tea with Billy, who treats the doll with respect and is an equal friend.

Thomas, Marlo (introd.). *Free to be . . . You and Me.* New York, McGraw Hill, 1974.
A collection of songs, poems and stories, including a song about a boy who wants a doll, a story about "Zachary's divorce", an exchange of letters between a boy and the girl he is excluding from his baseball team, and a re-telling of the story of Atalanta, cutting out the trickery involved, and ending, " 'Thank you, sire,' said John to the king, 'but I could not possibly marry your daughter unless she wished to marry me. I have run this race for the chance to talk with Atalanta, and, if she is willing, I am ready to claim my prize.' " (135)

Travers, P.L. *Mary Poppins.* Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1962. PB.
Mary Poppins is at once a very real nurse and a semi-mythical figure. She is self-sufficient, with a great self-respect that overflows into vanity, but although she is comic it is in a very positive way. There are some stereotyped details — when they go Christmas shopping, Michael wants a train, Jane a doll's pram — but they aren't obtrusive.

Also, *Mary Poppins Comes Back, Mary Poppins in the Park, Mary Poppins Opens the Door.*

Treadgold, Mary. *This Summer, Last Summer.* London, Hamish Hamilton, 1968. An Antelope Book.
When Lou goes back to her godmother's in the country, she finds that Miss Bligh has died and that Milly Hopkins is not the friend she thought. Then she finds a solidarity with Miss Parsons, since they have both lost friends in different ways.

Vestly, Ann-Cath. *Hello Aurora!* Harmondsworth, Longman, 1973.
Brilliant. Aurora's mother is a lawyer and her father is a student, so he stays home and looks after Aurora and baby Socrates. Some very funny scenes like the one where Aurora plays mothers and fathers with some other girls and can't understand their idea of home life. She worries at times about people's reactions to her family situation, but can talk about it with her parents.
Also, *Aurora and the Little Blue Car*, where Aurora's father learns to drive the car. The relationship between the parents shown far more fully than usual.

From Jan Harper's *The Potter Family*, illus. Judith Crabtree, published by Wren.

FICTION 3

Aiken, Joan. *The Wolves of Willoughby Chase.* Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1968. PB.
The first of a series set in the imaginary reign of James III — comic and exciting adventures where girls are consistently as resourceful as boys. *Black hearts in Battersea* introduces Dido Twite, who foils a series of Hanoverian plots in the next two books, *Nightbirds on Nantucket* and *The Cuckoo Tree.* Dido is a Cockney tough, resourceful, forthright, comical and firm in her loyalties, with a special brand of slang — " 'This is a fubsy kind o' set-out . . . Still, no use bawling over botched butter — have to make the best of it."
Also, *Midnight is a Place,* a brilliant novel about Victorian industrial society.

Almedingden, E. M. *Anna.* London, O.U.P., 1972.
Anna does lessons when most Russian girls did not have this kind of education, and her merchant father also trains her to take charge of the house and lands when her brother goes overseas, and allows her a choice in who she marries.

Arthur, Ruth M. *My Daughter Nicola.* London, Gollancz, 1966.
Nicola starts off small for her age, so she is a battler from the start. Then she finds out her father wanted a boy, so she tries to become one, and gets criticism from all sides. At last she gets recognition for her singing, the one thing she had never really thought about.

Bacon, Martha. *Sophia Scrooby Preserved.* London, Gollancz, 1971. Also PB, Puffin.
Pansy is born in Africa, a chieftain's daughter. She becomes a slave to the Scroobies, whom she gets very fond of, and when they have to sell her she makes her way back to them by way of a trading ship and Drury Lane. The story is half history, half fantasy, and Pansy's questioning intelligence, enterprise and persistence are remarkable.

Bagnold, Enid. *National Velvet.* London, Heinemann, 1935. Also PB, Peacock.
The amazing story, made possible and moving, of how Velvet Brown wins the Grand National on a horse she won in a raffle. Her love for her mother, herself a former channel swimmer, is part of her strength.

Bawden, Nina. *The Runaway Summer.* Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1972. PB.
Mary and Simon shelter Krishna, an illegal immigrant. Mary is staying with her Aunt Alice, whom she tries to build up as an ogre, but who is the person she turns to when Krishna gets sick. When her mother and step-father call for her she chooses to stay where she is.

Benary, Margot. *The Wicket Enchantment.* London, Macmillan, 1956.
Vogelsang is under an enchantment, and Anenome and the aunts are going to have to act fast to save the town, especially as the men are behaving so strangely. They make a formidable team.

Berna, Paul. *A Hundred Million Francs.* London, Bodley Head, 1957. Also PB, Puffin.
A gang of street children tangle with some thieves. There are three girls in the gang, and Marion, who looks after injured dogs and can call up half the dogs in the neighbourhood, is one of the gang leaders.

Boston, Lucy M. *The Chimneys of Green Knowe.* London, Faber, 1958. PB.
Green Knowe is peopled by friendly ghosts. In this book Mrs Oldknow tells Tolly about Susan, born blind, and how she developed from an over-protected state to a really active one.

Brown, Pamela. *The Swish of the Curtain.* London, Brockhampton, 1971 (rev. ed.)
Written when the author was fourteen, this is a relaxed happy story about a group of children who get together and start their own theatre, in a co-operative way. Lyn is the producer, and girls and boys equally work out their career ambitions through the theatre.

Burch, Robert. *Queenie Peavey.* New York, Viking, 1966.
Queenie Peavey's father is in goal, and she bears the brunt of it. But though she is defiant, she is intelligent — she throws stones, but aims well, argues, but argues logically. And she's got determination. The Head tells her encouragingly that she could be a nurse some day. "Queenie smiled back. 'I may grow up to be a doctor.' " (150)

Burnett, Frances Hodgson. *A Little Princess.* Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1961. PB.
First published in 1905. At first Sarah is a princess because her father gives her so much, but after his death she has to become a servant at the same school, and discovers that being a princess is a state of mind. Contains the classic line: " 'I will beg your pardon for laughing, if it was rude . . . but I won't beg your pardon for thinking.' " (13)
Also, *The Secret Garden.*

Bush, Helen. *Mary Anning's Treasures.* London, Gollancz, 1967.
Mary Anning helped her father collect fossils, and when he dies she supports the family by it and develops a real intellectual curiosity about her finds. But mother is the meal-preparer and no more, and brother Joseph makes a few cracks about "girls".

Canfield, Dorothy. *Betsy.* London, Bodley Head, 1962. First published 1916.
Aunt Frances shares Elizabeth Ann's thoughts and understands her fears, but in doing so she makes her fearful and over-sensitive. When she has to stay with country relatives, she quickly learns to do things and think things out for herself, and take on responsibility.

Cleaver, Vera and Bill. *Ellen Grae and Lady Ellen Grae.* London, Hamish Hamilton, 1973.
Ellen Grae is an explorer and storyteller, active and freeranging.. When her father decides she is "completely uninhibited", she is sent off to be trained as a lady, but though she does her best all she succeeds in doing is causing her cousin Laura to question her own ways. " 'I swear, this *is* a contraption, isn't it? Funny I never noticed that before. I've been wearing suspender belts for two years now, and I never noticed it.' " (148) The Cleavers constantly deal with unusual situations, with thought and humour, not for sensation value.
Also, *Grover, I would rather be a Turnip, Where the Lilies Bloom.*

Davidson, Mickie. *Helen Keller's Teacher.* London, Macdonald, 1965.
A novel about Annie Sullivan. Most of her childhood was spent in the poorhouse, herself her only advantage, and her spirit and determination and anger at her own disability, as much as her patience and inventiveness, fitted her to be Helen Keller's teacher.

Fitzhugh, Louise. *Harriet the Spy.* New York, Harper and Row, 1964.
Harriet makes notes about everything, all the time. When her friends find her notebook she is ostracized, but even feeling bad can't stop her note-taking. She has a driving uncompromising intelligence that gets her into some bad situations, but in the end she has learned some methods of coping.

Gardam, Jane. *A Long Way from Verona.* London, Hamish Hamilton, 1971. Also PB, Puffin.
England in wartime. The boredom and the horror and the glory, all in the context of school life. Jessica Vye learns something about love and death, publishes a poem, and finds out that the man who told her she was a writer beyond all possible doubt is the author of a series of slushy travel books. Nothing is simple, but Jessica comes through as a very positive person.

George, Jean Craighead. *Julie of the Wolves.* London, Hamish Hamilton, 1973.
Julie runs away when a marriage of convenience turns dicey, and when she meets up with a wolf pack on the tundra she has the resourcefulness to study them and join them, coping on the bare essentials.

Gripe, Maria. *The Night Daddy.* London, Chatto and Windus, 1971.
"Since there were day mothers why shouldn't there be night fathers?" (11) asks this book which is about the relationship between Julia and her night babysitter. Julia is independent, with opinions on everything: the night daddy is sensitive and involved in his book.

Greene, Constance C. *Leo the Lioness.* New York, Viking, 1970.
Fourteen year old Tib's thoughts and feelings over the period when her older sister starts dating. She's acute and logical, with a punchy way of expressing herself. "I have read plenty of articles telling girls what strategy to use to make boys like them. I have never read an article telling boys how to make girls like them. It makes me sore." (71)

Guy, Rosa. *The Friends*. London, Gollancz, 1974.
West Indians in America. Calvin is charming, but wants total control of his family. Phyllisia envies her sister's beauty, and despises Edie for being poor and unattractive, though Edie proves herself a loyal friend over and over. However it is over Edie that Phyllisia finally gets the courage to stand up to Calvin.

Harris, Mary K. *The Bus Girls*. London, Faber, 1965.
Proud Hetty and mercurial Davina like each other from the moment Hetty comes to the school, but they have to check each other out fully before committing themselves. A friendship that is really created for us, not just taken for granted.
Also, *Jessica on her Own, Penny's way* and *Seraphina* (PB).

Katz, Bobbi. *The Manifesto and Me — Meg*. New York, Franklin Watts, 1974. Available from Dr Duncan's — see *Feminist Books* section.
Meg starts a consciousness raising group at high school, and they burn their Taffy Teen dolls as a demonstration. Life becomes very complex, and Meg often wishes she hadn't started anything, but she keeps at it. Maybe a bit too diagrammatic.

Konigsberg, E. L. *From the mixed-up files of Mrs Basil E. Frankweiler*. London, Macmillan, 1967. Also PB, Puffin.
Claudia runs away. "Perhaps it was because she had to both empty the dishwasher and set the table on the same night while her brothers got out of everything", or perhaps because of "the sameness of each and every week." (6) She takes her brother Jamie because he has money and can keep a secret, and they hide out in the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art. In the process they become a team, a closer relationship than their brother/sister one.
Also, *Jennifer, Hecate, Macbeth, and Me*.

Konigsberg, E. L. *The Dragon in the Ghetto Caper*. New York, Atheneum, 1974.
Andy Chronister wants to be a detective. He takes on Edie Yakots as sidekick — "She was hardly what Andy had in mind; she was twenty nine years old and married, for God's sake" (8) — and in the process of explaining to enthusiastic disjointed Edie how to be cool, he loses his own need for cool.

Krasilovsky, Phyllis. *The popular girls' club*. Kingswood, World's Work, 1974.
When she is rejected from the popular girls' club by her former friends, the heroine finds out that shy Amy and clever Clara are in fact more fun to be with, and that the popular girls have a really narrow standard of acceptance.

Lawrence, Ann. *The Half Brothers*. London, Macmillan, 1973.
The half brothers, princes of Evernia, court Ambra, the new Duchess of Bergamot, and influence her towards music, scholarship and statescraft in turn. Ambra learns from them, but in the end she starts on her own projects, and makes a condition that the prince who marries her gives up

his claim on the throne of Evernia, thus sorting out who only wants the Duchy, not her.
Also, *Tom Ass.*

Lenski, Lois. *Strawberry Girl.* New York, Lipincott, 1945.
Birdie Boyer and her family move to a new farm and cope with nature and the feuding next door neighbour.

Linklater, Eric. *The Wind on the Moon.* Macmillan, London, 1948. Also PB, Puffin.
The wind is on the moon, and so Dinah and Dorinda are behaving badly. But it's creative disobedience at times, as they solve a mystery, rescue a jury from gaol and bring their father safely out of the castle of Glieder-mannheim with the help of a falcon and a female puma.

Macdonald, George. *The Princess and the Goblin.* Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1964. PB.
First published in 1872. The classic story of Irene and her mysterious great-great-grandmother.

Miles, Betty. *The Real Me.* New York, Knopf, 1974. Available from Dr Duncan — see *Feminist Books* section.
Barbara just wants to take over her brother's paper round and to do something more interesting than Slimnastics in school sport, but it's amazing what you can't do if you're a girl, and amazing what you get yourself into if you put up a fight.

Montgomery, Lucy M. *Anne of Green Gables.* New York, Grosset and Dunlap, 1908.
Anne is an orphan. Sent to the Cuthberts, who had ordered a boy, she isn't even their idea of a girl, but her enthusiasm and romantic imagination win them over, and Marilla learns late in life to love people. A bit too much about appearance though.

Nicholson, Joyce. *Freedom for Priscilla.* Melbourne, Nelson, 1974. (rev. ed.)
In her struggle to become a doctor Priscilla has to fight her Victorian father all the way. " 'Do you know what is expected of students of medicine . . . Things to do with the body, things no real lady could possibly do.' " (103) Priscilla succeeds, exceptionally but believably.

Peyton, K. M. *Fly-by-Night.* London, O.U.P., 1968. PB.
Ruth wants a horse, and she gets one, but the story is also concerned with questions of where the money is to come from in a family that is not well off, and how to get instructions from Peter McNair, who has been pushed so far by his horsy father that he can't stand to talk about horses. Horses tend to be described as tough and masculine, feminine and elegant.

Phipson, Joan. *Good Luck to the Rider.* Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1953.
Barbara hates riding until she rescues a brumby foal. Through training up Rosinante she learns courage, not only in riding, but in speaking up for herself.
Also, *Six and Silver.*

Polland, Madeleine. *Queen without Crown.* London, Constable, 1965.
Queen Grainne O'Malley of Ireland, pirate, fighter and snuff-taker, has to decide whether to continue her resistance or yield to Elizabeth I for the sake of her people. She is wild and adventurous, but makes her decisions with rational care.

Prichard, Kathleen Susannah. *The Wild Oats of Han.* Melbourne, Lansdowne, 1968. (rev. ed.)
Han goes her own free way through her childhood, though "she did not like it . . . when Teddy and Tom began to do all sorts of boys' things that she had never done . . . Being a boy, Han thought, must be more important than being a girl if it meant having an axe all to yourself to cut wood." (46-7)

Rankin, Louise. *Daughter of the Mountains.* London, Bodley Head, 1962.
When her golden-haired Lhasa puppy is stolen, Momo sets off down the Great Trade Route to find him. Courageous in her single mindedness, she also helps the bullied orphan Tsu Foo along the way, though unfortunately the happy ending comes courtesy of the British Empire.

Robinson, Joan G. *Charley.* London, Collins, 1969.
Charley thinks no one wants her for the holidays, so she runs away and lives in a field. Aunt Emm, who might have been the stereotype of the unsympathetic adult, is shown as resenting Charley because she has so many more opportunities, and she and Charley get a chance to communicate from the crisis.

Seredy, Kate, *The Good Master.* London, Harrap, 1937.
Kate arrives on her uncle's farm, a headstrong active girl who wants to ride, swim, learn all about everything. She is constantly described as almost as good as a boy, but in actual fact no differences are made between her and Jancsi. But don't go on to *The Singing Tree*, unless you want to see Kate accepting her womanly destiny.

Sharmat, Marjorie Weinman. *Getting Something on Maggie Marmelstein.* New York, Harper and Row, 1971.
Thad Smith has to get something on Maggie Marmelstein because she has seen him stirring Mrs Marmelstein's bread pudding and she is going to tell everyone that he is a sissy cook. But during the feud they come to respect each other and neither uses the trump card after all.

Snyder, Zilpha Keatley. *The Egypt Game.* New York, Atheneum, 1968.
Melanie finds her new friend April's fur stole and false eyelashes off-putting until she realises they are April's defence against the world. They start up the Egypt game, joined by two boys from school. The social taboos against boys being friendly with girls are neatly observed, and the murder of a young girl in the neighbourhood is neither dwelt on nor glossed over.
Also, *The Headless Cupid* (Guildford, Lutterworth, 1973)

Spence, Eleanor. *The Switherby Pilgrims.* London, O.U.P., 1967.
Miss Arabella Braithwaite emigrates to New South Wales with ten orphans to start a farm. Cassie, active, unconcerned about appearances and

ladylike behaviour, is a trial and a support. Division of labour on the farm is in general even between boys and girls.
Also, *Patterson's Track.*

Spykman, E. C. *A Lemon and a Star.* Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1968. (PB).
The Cares family adjust to the accidents and adventures of life, each other and a stepmother. Edie wins the boys only steeplechase and Jane learns boxing.
Also, *Terrible Horrible Edie, Edie on the Warpath.*

Stewart, A. C. *Elizabeth's Tower.* London, Faber, 1972.
Through an adventure of spies and kidnapping marches brave, lonely, uncompromising Elizabeth. " 'People never *see* how things go . . . Then I have to show them — and they *hate* that.' " (10) She has an equal relationship with Lawrence, who adopts her.

Storr, Catherine. *Marianne Dreams.* Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1964. PB.
What Marianne draws with the old pencil turns up in her dreams, and she adventures with Mark to escape from the dream house at the same time as he recovers from his illness in real life.

Stratfield, Noel. *Ballet Shoes,* Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1949. PB.
Great Uncle Matthew has disappeared and money is running out, so the three adopted Fossil children get to work on the family fortunes by way of dancing school. Posy is a professional at the age of six. Pauline wants to act. Petrova is just sticking it out until she can become a motor mechanic. A real sense of the importance and involvement of work.
Also, *Thursday's Child.*

Symons, Geraldine. *Miss Rivers and Miss Bridges.* London, Macmillan, 1971.
Atalanta drags Pansy into the militant suffragette movement, and they break the window of number 10 Downing Street, disrupt a play and spend a few hours in the cells. A comic adventure, but their motives are taken seriously.
Also, *The Workhouse Child, Mademoiselle.*

Tate, Joan. *The Runners.* Melbourne, Wren, 1974.
"There was nothing the boys could do that she couldn't, so she was one of them; Jock, Stewart, Alistair and Alison. The runners." (9) On their runs they begin to suspect that they have discovered a stolen car racket.

Trease, Geoffrey. *The Crown of Violet.* Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1968. PB.
On one side lots of debate about the exclusion of women from public life in Euripidean Athens, on the other side Alexis's friendship with Corinna, who as an alien goes against all the conventions of Athenian society without noticing.
Also, *Cue for Treason.*

From Judith Crabtree's *Emily Jane and the Grumphfs*, illus. Sue O'Bryan, published by Wren.

White, E. B. *Charlotte's Web.* London, Hamish Hamilton, 1952. Also PB, Puffin.
Charlotte the spider saves her friend Wilbur from becoming bacon. "It is not often that someone comes along who is a true friend and a good writer. Charlotte was both." (170)

Wiggin, Kate Douglas. *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm.* New York, Grosset and Dunlap, 1903.
Rebecca tries to please her aunts and develops her ambitions secretly. She is energetic, poetic and diligent by turns, though the ending is ambiguous as to whether she will get a chance to develop these qualities.

Williams, Jay, and Abrashkin, Raymond. *Danny Dunn-Invisible Boy.* London, Macdonald, 1974.
Professor Bullfinch invents an invisibility device and destroys it again because of the possibilities of its being used to spy on people. With him work Danny Dunn, Joe who is into literature, and Irene, scientist and baseball player. Asked whether it bothers her to be the only girl on the team, Irene says, " 'I get the feeling everybody is looking twice as hard at me as at anyone else. They expect me either to do worse than everybody else, or better.' " (35)

FICTION 4

Arundel, Honor. *The Terrible Temptation.* London, Hamish Hamilton, 1971.
Jan, observing her mother and married sisters and brothers, decides that the only rational policy is independence. But as a student in Edinburgh she gets into a close relationship with Thomas, who cares about everyone and everything. Jan's real feelings aren't always the ones she wants to have; Thomas's spontaneity can be very oppressive. They face real conflicts and real decisions, and incidentally sleep together. Also, *The Blanket Word*, a sequel. But ignore *A Family Failure*, where a family is split up by mother's decision to take a job, and *The Two Sisters*, whose moral is, "a man who doesn't get a chance to fulfil his ambition makes a terrible husband."

Brinsmead, H. F. *Listen to the Wind.* London, O.U.P., 1970.
In her ambition to own and sail her own trawler in the prawning fleet, Loveday Smith has to face disapproval of her as a woman, disapproval of her riendship with the Islander Tam Greenrush, and various natural disasters. Tam's sister goes prawning too, and the local woman who backs them gains the confidence to stand up to her bullying husband.
Also, *Pastures of the Blue Crane.*

Cavanna, Betty. *Joy Ride.* New York, Morrow, 1974. Susan is lame. "As boys started to look at girls differently they had stopped looking at her at all." (57) She responds to her family's pressure to be normal, but also responds to Mary, who wants to pain, and says, " 'I don't know whether any woman would have the energy to raise a family and at the same time become a great painter.' " (82)

Chetin, Helen. *Perihan's Promise, Turkish Relatives and the dirty old Imam.* Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1973.
Perihan's journal about her visit to her Turkish relatives — she turns a critical eye on everything from her (separated) parents to Turkish customs, especially concerning women, but she is also very open to enjoy or understand.

Clarke, Joan. *Early Rising.* London, Cape, 1974.
Based on the records of a woman living at the turn of the century. Erica Stock strives for an education. She is intelligent, but not an intellectual superwoman, and her stepsister who looks after them makes their lives miserable at times but had her own struggle for recognition in the music world.

Cleaver, Vera and Bill. *The Whys and Wherefores of Littabelle Lee.* London, Hamish Hamilton, 1974.
When multiple disaster strikes her family, Littabelle Lee has to face her whys and wherefores, which include delivering a baby, taking on teaching, opening the windpipe of a choking boy, fighting against illness, looking after her grandparents and finally subpoena-ing her aunt and uncle, who are hiding from responsibility in the town. Aunt Sorrow runs away when she realises she has spent her whole life caring for her parents, and Littabelle realised she will have to get away too.

Coolidge, Olivia. *Come by Here.* Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1970.
Minty Lou's mother, Big Lou, manages to overcome the usual lot of her black people, but when her parents are killed Minty Lou is shunted from place to place. Her spirit flashes through all her troubles, but spirit is no use to someone with no power. Big Lou's success — "Rooted in nothing, it could not when she died be handed on" (xi) — is opposed to Grandma Minty's ghetto communalism, but neither is seen as the answer by this complex book.

Dahlin, Doris. *The Sit-In Game.* London, Bodley Head, 1972.
The students at a high school try all the orthodox channels for putting their criticisms, then occupy the building. At first they have a marvellous feeling of co-operation, but then the community reaction comes, with violence and disillusion the end result. The story is told by the students — Britt who is pregnant, Anders who wants to design clothes, Hans whose widowed mother is the only parent to come along in support — sometimes a difficult narrative method.

Engdahl, Sylvia L. *Enchantress from the Stars.* New York, Atheneum, 1971. PB.
The Federation has a body of agents, of whom Elana is one, who go among the less developed planets, looking after them without unduly influencing their development. She is constantly faced with choices of real moral seriousness and is constantly adequate. Gripping feminist science fiction.
Also, *The Far Side of Evil,* a sequel, and *This Star Shall Abide.*

Forest, Antonia. *The Ready-Made Family.* London, Faber, 1967.
When Karen Marlowe marries Edwin Dodd, she gets a ready made family, Chas, Rose and Fob, and causes chaos in the Marlowe family when they all move in. Family conflicts and an encounter with a rapist when Rose runs away to look for her dead mother, all seen through the eyes of resourceful Nicola. One in a series about the Marlowes.

Greene, Bette. *Summer of my German Soldier.* London, Hamish Hamilton, 1974.
Patty Bergen is growing up in an American Jewish family during World War 2, with a father who is the model of a patriarch. Her only friends are Ruth, the black maid, Freddy who is poor, and then Anton, the escaped German P.O.W. whom she shelters, with disastrous consequences when she is found out. A powerful book about the workings of the system, and about love between the people the system rejects.

Hosford, Jessie. *You Bet your Boots I Can.* Harmondsworth, Longman, 1973.
The Nebraska frontier at the turn of the century. Judy goes along with a certain amount of the values of her society, but her main aim is to get an education and be independent, and in pursuit of that she is cheerfully determined. The man she loves proposes to her and she refuses at first because, " 'Jerry didn't ask me to marry him. He simply announced, and without preliminary, as though he were speaking to a brainless child, "We'll get married!" ' " (260)

Hunter, Kristin, *The Soul Brothers and Sister Lou.* London, Macdonald, 1968.
Louretta Hawkins, black American, struggles with the limitations of her situation — "No one minded if boys spent all their time in streets and alleys. When girls did the same thing, people said they were bad." (3) She can't work out whether to control her bitterness or let it out, and when the group accidently becomes famous in the music world she finds that success brings even more to struggle against.

Jarunkova, Klara. *Don't Cry for Me.* London, Dent, 1971.
A low key story of Olga's family, school, artistic ambitions and first love. She learns from the last, rather than being shattered. Next time, she realises, "I would start getting sentimental about him as I did with you. Only that would be a sign for the antidote to go to work. It would tell me: Stop! We've heard all this before." (171)

Kerr, M. E. *Dinky Hocker Shoots Smack.* London, Gollancz, 1973.
"People who don't shoot smack have problems too" (158), but these are the only kind Dinky's parents realise, so Dinky ends up spray painting the town to draw their attention to her. A bizarre funny terse book, where no one's right or wrong, and everyone's slightly off-centre.
Also, *The Son of Someone Famous* (New York, Harper and Row, 1974)

Klein, Norma. *Taking Sides.* New York, Pantheon, 1974.
Nell and her brother live with their father and stay with their mother, though "Everyone else I know who has parents that are divorced lives with their mother." (5) The book is packed with interesting minor characters like mother's friend Greta who makes snow *women*, and with Nell's observations. "How come they always say the boy will lose respect for you if you sleep with him? Why shouldn't the girl lose respect for the boy?" (149) Norma Klein has written a lot of novels about unusual family situations, but unfortunately this and *It's not What You Expect* are the only ones that seem to be available here.

L'Engle, Madeleine. *A Wrinkle in Time.* Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1967. PB.
Science fiction/fantasy. Meg's mother is a scientist as well as her father, and Meg is the main mover in the search to find her father, helped by three otherworldly women. However, as the Feminists on Children's Media point out, "Why did father have to be a super-scientist, topping mother by a degree or two?" And why are Meg's doubts about being beautiful solved by Calvin saying she is, not by her deciding it's unimportant?

Macgregor, Iona. *The Tree of Liberty.* London, Faber, 1972.
In 1792 Edinburgh the ideas of revolutionary France and Paine's *Rights of Man* affect Sandy and Caroline, chidren of a prosperous merchant. Caroline resents the passivity forced on her by her sex and spurs Sandy on where she can, sticking to her opinions even when it means breaking with John Robertson. "If he thinks my opinions don't matter, why, then I don't matter. It's not just politics, it's everything, everything." (214)

Madison, Winifred. *Growing up in a hurry.* Toronto, Little, Brown, 1973.
An amazingly dull dust jacket conceals the only sensible novel to go into a girl's feelings about abortion. So shy that she feels it a disability equal to blindness, Karen becomes involved with Steve Makamura through her love for music. A friend of her mother's is on the desk at the Family Planning clinic when she goes, and she only finds out she is pregnant when she and Steve have separated. Her parents' reactions and their takeover are well observed, and afterwards she feels both regret and relief. "There was no perfect way, no easy way, no way without pain." (168)

O'Dell, Scott. *Island of the Blue Dolphins.* Harmondsworth, Longman, 1960.
"One of the rare books showing a girl with strong physical skills. She kills wild dogs, constructs her own weapons, kills a giant tentacled seafish, and hauls a six man canoe by herself . . . and there we are indeed tempted to ask why such a marvellous heroine can only be encountered alone on an island — and never in the midst of society?" Feminists on Children's Media.

Peck, Richard. *Through a brief Darkness.* New York, Viking, 1973.
Karen tries to close her eyes to her father's shady dealings, until she is kidnapped as a result of them. She rescues herself and reassesses their relationship. An entertainment rather than a novel of issues, but a pacy one.

Peyton, K. M. *The Maplin Bird.* London, O.U.P., 1964. When Emily and Toby run away, Toby can work their father's boat but Emily finds work hard to get. Finally she becomes a housemaid, and they get involved in the lives of excitement-chasing Adam and Selina, who is lazy and wilful as the daughter of the house, but wants to study medicine. Emily falls in love with Adam, but sees it realistically and controls it. Both women in their different ways and circumstances want self determination, and win some victories against the times.

Richardson, Henry Handel. *The Getting of Wisdom.* London, Heinemann, 1960.
First published in 1910. Clear, penetrating account of the disciplining of Laura's imagination by good and bad forces. Laura constantly aims at and misses "proper" behaviour. "She could not then know that, even for the squarest peg, the right hole may ultimately be found; seeming unfitness prove to be only another aspect of a peculiar and special fitness." (234)

Rogers, Mary. *Freaky Friday.* London, Hamish Hamilton, 1973.
Annabel Andrews wakes up one morning to find that she and her mother have switched bodies, which gives Annabel a number of interesting insights, though her mother disappointingly spends the day having Annabel's bands taken off and buying her clothes. Uses the language of Women's Liberation, but there's no idea that the cleaning woman might not have appreciated being sacked because she smelled.

Speare, Elizabeth George. *The Witch of Blackbird Pond.* London, Gollancz, 1968.
Kit goes from Barbados to Puritan America, and her love of finery, independent spirit and friendship with an old Quaker woman who lives on the edge of the town all combine to make her a suitable victim for a witch hunt. She fights the charges, and chooses a roving life with Nat, rather than a settled one with William.

Sterling, Dorothy. *Mary Jane.* London, Constable, 1960.
Mary Jane and Fred are the first blacks to go to their local school. Fred gets into sport and finds things easier, but Mary Jane fights on in her own way, helped a bit by Sally who feels an outsider too because of being small. Prejudice is seen as more than overt hostility. "All 'your people', all Negroes have beautiful voices and sing spirituals . . . As if the colour of your skin could have anything to do with your voice." (63)

Tate, Joan. *The Tree.* London, Heinemann, 1970.
One of the few books that talks about factory work. Tina likes bits of her job in a clothing factory, and dislikes other bits. The book follows a standard romance pattern, with one important difference. David spent his childhood in institutions and he doesn't talk easily. Tina, first at school and then when they meet again at the factory, has worked out a system of writing him notes. So the relationship involves a more than usual sensitivity and imagination.

Townsend, John Rowe. *Good-night, Prof, love.* London, O.U.P., 1970.
Graham — sheltered, naive, dependent — meets Lyn — worldly, confident, independent. They run away, mainly through Graham's prompting, but it is Lyn's strength rather than his parents' threats that end it. The usual roles are reversed. Graham, desperate to get away from home, longs for the freedom of marriage. Lyn, more realistic, can see ahead to the inevitable problems.

Trease, Geoffrey. *Thunder of Valmy.* London, Macmillan, 1960.
Trease's usual consistent consideration of the part women play in history, this time the French Revolution. But his concept of women's oppression doesn't stretch to personal relationships, so while French women are marching Pauline is admiring Pierre's masterfulness.

Wells, Rosemary. *The Fog Comes on little Pig's Feet.* New York, Dial, 1972.
Rachel wants to train as a concert pianist, but her parents send her to an exclusive boarding school. She helps misfit Carlisle run away, and is expelled when she won't betray her. The horrors of the school are not exaggerated — all they want of her is conformity, and if it weren't for her music she would probably conform. The unwillingness of her stand makes it more real and moving.

Wilson, Barbara Ker. *The Lovely Summer.* London, Constable, 1960.
Helen and Vanessa become involved in the militant suffragette movement. Helen is the more extreme at first, but is almost co-opted by society life, until she makes a public stand against the man she is going to marry and realises he doesn't take her seriously. Vanessa quietly observes discrimination around her. Marriage is still the inevitable end of the story, though among the minor characters there are single women leading satisfying lives.

Wojciechowska, Maia. *Don't play dead before you have to.* New York, Harper and Row, 1970.
Byron's stream of consciousness as he baby-sits Charlie, a remarkable five year old, and goes from trying to normalize Charlie — "You've got to start playing it cool, man. Why? Because boys aren't supposed to get all emotional and stuff" (20) — to throwing away his own cool and setting off on a cross country trip with Charlie. Byron supports Charlie, Charlie gives Byron the benefit of his clear eyed view.

Zindel, Paul. *My Darling, My Hamburger.* London, Bodley Head, 1970.
A brilliant anatomy of the dating scene, with painfully comic scenes like the double date at a film of an uninhibited primitive tribe. Pretty Liz is destroyed when she gets pregnant as a rebellion against her family and believes Sean when he says he will marry her. Plain Maggie survives, gaining a complicated understanding. There is pity for both men and women, but men are in the positions of power.
Also, *The Pigman* (London, Macmillan, 1971. P.B.).

NON-FICTION

Non-fiction works are supposed to be purely factual — of course this isn't the case. Science books will give you the impression that only boys do experiments. Cookery books will give you the idea that only female hands can hold a frying pan. Social studies books will give you the idea that the family *has* to be the basic unit of society. One American study noted that even in maths books, problems dealing with large sums of money were about men, while problems with women in were about weight or hair colour. You can learn to say, "John is better than Betty" in any language of the world.

It is important to be on the watch for sexism just as much when dealing with non-fiction, to try to find science books that show girls doing experiments and cookery books that show boys cooking. However finding non-fiction that really goes *against* sex role conditioning is a harder job. One obvious area to start with is books on Women's Liberation. This turned out to be a bit disappointing. Apart from Joy Groombridge's *His and Hers*, there was nothing that tried to explain the basics of Women's Liberation with the right language and approach for high school people, not to mention younger readers. Most of the books in the *Feminism* section are only suitable for readers who have a fair bit of background already.

Sex education always turn out to be sex role education, so there is a section on sex education too. Books on sex education are in general filled with depressing cliches about what boys are like and what girls are like, most of them taken straight from other sex education books, without any kind of research behind them at all. The books listed here aren't totally cliche free. I wanted to provide a graded reading list for the full age range, so some of the books are very good, but some are the best of a bad lot. Just as we badly need introductory books on feminism, so we badly need books or sex education which don't moralise and push people into conformity.

These are the areas of non-fiction that deal directly with sex-role conditioning. And then? Sexism isn't just a matter of the way one person relates to another: sexism is built into the structures of society. So we should be able to find (or write) countersexist books on politics, business, linguistics and so on. But it's hard to say what we would be looking for. For instance, there's no list of biographies of great women in the booklist, although reviving the memory of forgotten women has been part of the feminist struggle, because it seemed to us that to concentrate on great women is to accept a sexist view of history. History should be the record of all people, not only of an elite, and so we find novels like Joan Clarke's *Early Rising* or Olivia Coolidge's *Come by Here*, based on records of actual lives, give us better history than the history books. Coolidge says in her Introduction:

> Obscure people have much to contribute which ought not to be forgotten; even though their actual names may not endure. (xi)

Positive standards for countersexist non-fiction are the next step, but that is going to involve imagination and hard work in equal parts.

FEMINISM
BOOKS FOR HIGH SCHOOL PEOPLE

Carson, Dale. *Girls are Equal Too.* New York, Atheneum, 122 East 42nd Street.
This is breaking all the rules. I haven't read this book and I haven't seen it in Australia, but given the absolute lack of material of this kind and the fact that its chapter headings and cartoon illustrations look pretty zappy, I decided to tell you about it anyway. Order it from your library or bookseller and see what happens . . .

De Crow, Karen. *The Young woman's Guide to Liberation.* U.S.A., Pegasus, 1971.
Comprehensive, but the language is fairly highbrow, the method is more to quote statistics than to talk about personal experiences. It isn't really an introduction — you'd need to know something already and be looking for more.

Groombridge, Joy. *His and Hers.* Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1971. Connexions series.
Brilliant use of advertising slogans, cartoons, old rhymes and newspaper cuttings to relate to the reader's experience such strong and witty statements as, "For the first year or so, the baby is fairly unresponsive to propaganda, so the mother does the best she can with outward appearances." (5) Amazing detail in a small book.

Komisar, Lucy. *The New Feminism.* London, Franklin Watts, 1971.
Clear, restained, comprehensive. American statistics and examples unfortunately. The language is good, never difficult but never condescending — however it is too restrained at times, could do a bit more to get the reader in.
The Women's Movement Children's Literature Co-operative is working on a book about Women's Liberation for use in and out of schools, so if you're interested, get in touch. I've quoted below a few of the many books on feminism — they would be suitable follow ups to the books listed above.

COLLECTED ARTICLES

Klagsbrun, Francine (ed.). *The First Ms Reader.* New York, Warner, 1973.
Morgan, Robin (ed.). *Sisterhood is Powerful.* New York, Vintage, 1970.

SPECIAL TOPICS

Edgar, Patricia and McPhee, Hilary. *Media She.* Melbourne, Heinemann 1974.
An analysis of advertising, done mainly through pictures.

Oakley, Ann. *Sex, Gender and Society.* Melbourne, Sun, 1972.
How far does science back up current cliches about sex roles?

Orloff, Katharine. *Rock'n roll women.* Los Angeles, Nash, 1974.
Interviews with women about their attitudes to themselves and their music.

SEX EDUCATION

3-7 years.
Knudsen, Per Holm. *How a baby is made.* London, Franklin Watts, 1973.
The aim is for this to be "one more amusing picture book", rather than a segregated away sex education book. Chunky comic little people, called man and woman, not mummy and daddy, go through intercourse and pregnancy, the man standing arms linked with the woman while the changes of pregnancy take place. The text is fairly technical, obviously meant to be read aloud and explained.

7-12 years.
Widerberg, Siv. *The Kids' Own XYZ of Love.* trans. Irene D. Morris. London, Spearman, 1971.
Ms. Widerberg says, "It is my conviction that children are far less shocked by real information on this subject than many adults are prepared to believe." (7) She uses words from everyday use rather than medical terminology, with complete naturalness. This is a direct, lively, unprejudiced book which actually manages to make sex sound enjoyable, and answers a whole lot of the questions kids really do want answered.

12-15 years.
Hansen, Soren and Jensen, Jesper. *The Little Red Schoolbook.* trans. Berit Thornberry. Melbourne, Brolga, 1972. P.B.
A sensible account of most aspects of sex. Brief, no diagrams, but a very sound general attitude. "It's normal to be different . . . 'Abnormal' is a very dangerous word. It's often used as an excuse for the persecution and repression of some people by others." There's good discussion of general school problems as well.
Pomeroy, Wordell B. *Girls and Sex.* Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1971. P.B.
Goes into the subject at greater length, and discusses emotional complications more fully than most books aimed at this age group. A down to earth attitude to social conventions — "As long as it is necessary to play the ridiculous game of 'good girl', 'bad girl' and 'prude', I suppose the best thing a girl can do is confront squarely the kind of face she wants to present to the world and develop her behavior accordingly." (59) However Pomeroy himself is more influenced by social conventions than he realises — for instance, he feels tampons are good because "they teach a girl what it is like to have something in her vagina." (38) Recommended with reservations.

15-18 years.
Boston Women's Health Collective. *Our Bodies, Ourselves.* New York, Simon and Schuster, 1973.
This book aims to teach women about their bodies, so includes chapters on nutrition, exercise and self-defence, as well as the conventional aspects of sex education. A book to buy and browse through, packed with information and tactics and accounts of individual women's experiences.

Written by a group of women who got together to collect information on women's health, its language is in general simple and colloquial.

Claesson, B. H. *Boy Girl — Man Woman.* London, Calder and Boyars, 1971. P.B.

The facts and feelings of heterosexuality discussed with sensitivity. The author really seems interested in sexuality, not just in putting the old cliches together in a new way. " 'I love you' is an expression we whisper when we are in love — well, we feel the words inside even if we don't have the courage to say them. But it becomes an empty cliche when our infatuation fades and we still cling to the expression, as if to prove to ourselves and our partner that there is still something left of the old passion." (56) However other forms of sexuality, from homosexuality to rape, are dealt with so briefly that it would have been more honest not to deal with them at all.

For this age group I have also included three books on specific aspects of sex, for anyone who wants to read more deeply on these subjects.

Arnstein, Helen S. *What every woman needs to know about abortion.* New York, Scribner, 1973. P.B.

Firm, but not pugnacious, throughout. Covers every aspect of abortion, from process to feelings, and also talks of contraception in terms of a woman's whole sexual situation. An unusually perceptive book, with observations that really strike home — "After you have had a tooth pulled, you receive sympathy and comfort from your family and friends . . . When a woman has had an abortion she is not apt to receive such consolation." (73-4)

Pierce, Ruth. *Single and Pregnant.* Boston, Beacon Press, 1970.

The alternatives of adoption, abortion, single motherhood, marriage and contraception are clearly and carefully discussed. American, so the facts about laws, organisations and so on are not relevant, but the principles about finding out information is sound. However foetuses are called by the emotional word "baby", and babies are always "he".

Weinberg, George. *Society and the Healthy Homosexual.* New York, St Martin's Press, 1972.

A general discussion of homosexuality, with particular reference to the treatment of homosexuals in psychiatry. Dr Weinberg's main point is that homosexuality is not in itself an illness. Clear style, lots of examples, and an excellent chapter on communication between parents and children. "Avoid apologies: 'I'm sorry I won't be marrying the boy next door and having children'." (114)

FEMINIST CHILDREN'S BOOKS

These are books published by Women's Liberation groups all over the world. Some are available from the Doctor Duncan Revolution Bookshop, a mail order book service, P.O. Box 12, North Adelaide, South Australia, 5006. Some are available only from the groups concerned, in which case I have given their address.

ALL OF US, INC.
Route 2, Box 128,
Monmouth, Ore. 97361.
U.S.A.

Campbell, C. and Jefferson, C. *Zenaida.*
A bilingual story (Spanish-English) which follows three chicanitas on a child-sized adventure that takes an unexpected turn.

Kahn, M. and Slade, G. *Mother is a pitcher.*
A story in rhyme told by a ten year old girl whose mother is a pitcher on a baseball team.

In preparation: Becky and Brian and the great growly bear. Hooray for Ginger.

BEFORE WE ARE SIX — Books available from Dr Duncan.

Crawford, Sue Heffernan. *Minoo's Family.* illus. Frances McGlyn.
Minoo's different feelings when her parents' separate.

Geoffroy, Bernice. *Irene's Idea.* illus. Frances McGlyn.
On father's day Irene doesn't want to go to school because they are making father's day cards, but in the end she goes and makes a card about how she feels without a father.

Gustar, Susan Wakeling. *When I visit Daddy or Daddy visits me.* illus. Vivien Whatmough Cramer.
A boy's relationship with his father who has separated from his mother.

CANADIAN WOMEN'S EDUCATIONAL PRESS — Books available from Dr Duncan.

Allison, Beverley. *Mandy and the Flying Map.* illus. Ann Powell. Toronto, Women's Press, 1973.
Mandy really likes studying maps, and one day she takes off on one for a flight over the town. Lots of people try to rescue her, but she points out that she is enjoying herself.

Allison, Rosemary and Powell, Ann. *The travels of Ms. Beaver.* Toronto, Women's Press, 1973.
Beaver hitches off down the road to see the world. Her dam-making in the city presents them with a new lake, where she stays a while, then travels on.

Andrews, Jan. *Fresh Fish . . . and Chips.* Illus. Linda Donelly. Toronto, Women's Press, 1973.
The kids want fish and chips, so father starts peeling potatoes and mother heads for the beach and brings back lobster, whale, snail, eels, herring, octopus, squid.

FEMINIST PRESS — Available through Dr Duncan.

Danish, Barbara. *The Dragon and the Doctor.* New York, Feminist Press, 1971.
The dragon goes to the doctor to have his tail fixed, and in gratitude invites her to a party of strange creatures.

Heyn, Leah Lurie. *Challenge to become a doctor.* illus. Greta Handschuh. New York, Feminist Press, 1971.
The story of Elizabeth Blackwell, the first woman doctor, told with good detail and conversation.

Hochschild, Arlie Russell. *Coleen the Question Girl.* New York, Feminist Press, 1974.
Coleen, like so many kids, asks questions all the time. Her talents are finally recognized when she is made official question asker at the University, and everyone starts asking questions, and even finding a few answers.

Katz, Bobbi. *Nothing but a dog.* illus. Esther Gilman. New York, Feminist Press, 1972.
Gives a picture of a girl with a full active life in the process of describing her longing for a dog.

Rich, Gibson. *Firegirl.* illus. Charlotte Purrington Farley. New York, Feminist Press, 1972.
Brenda works really hard at convincing everybody that there can be such a thing as a firegirl in a fire station, and learns a lot about prejudice in the process.

Widerberg, Siv. *I'm like Me.* trans. Verne Moberg. New York, Feminist Press, 1973.
Poems from a child's point of view about friends, fathers, divorce, jeans, how to write a petition, mentruation, swearing, peeing in bed. Neat, simple, just the right words.

JOYFUL WORLD PRESS
468 Belvedere St.,
San Francisco, California 94117,
U.S.A.

Boccaccio, Shirley. *Penelope and the Mussels, Penelope goes to the Farmer's Market.*
Penelope and Peter lives with their friends, a raccoon and a salamander. Penelope pilots the plane that takes them on their adventures. Illustrated by the author with a combination of photographs and drawings.

LOLLIPOP POWER; INC.
P.O. Box 1171,
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514,
U.S.A.

Eichler, Margrit. *Martin's Father.* illus. Bev Magennis.
The way Martin's father looks after him.

Goldsmid, Paula. *Did you ever.* illus Janice Schopler.
The choice is up to you, out of a whole range of weird and wonderful activities for girls and boys.

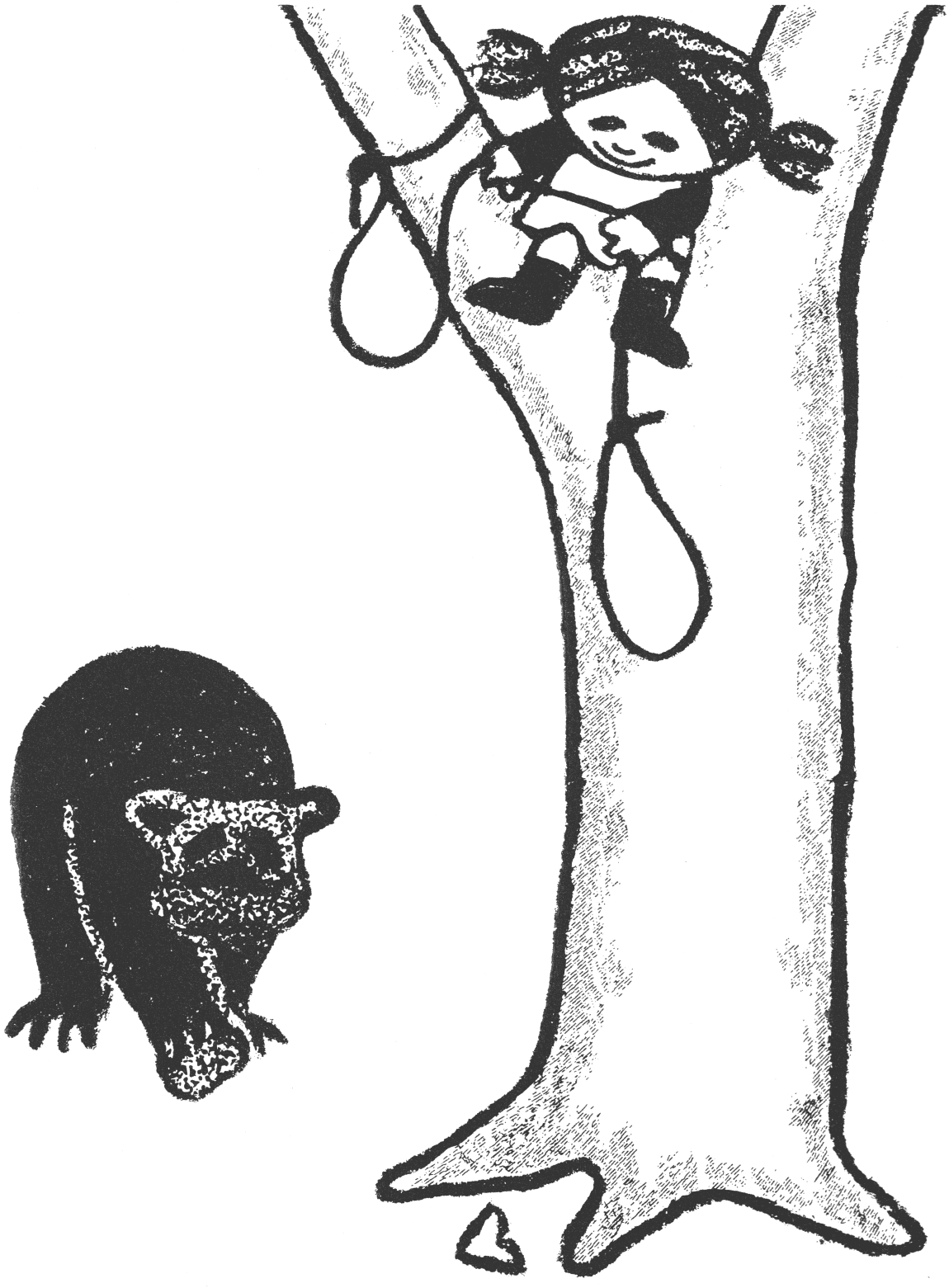
Good Year, Carmen. *The Sheep Book.*
A gentle story of a farmer and her sheep on a small California farm.

Phillips, Lynn. *Exactly like Me.*
"They say, 'Girls are soft',
But I'm tough as a wall.
They say girls are dainty,
But I'm not at all!"
A lively book about an independent girl who is proud of what she is.

Surowiecki, Sandra Lucas. *Joshua's Day.* illus. Patricia Riley Lenthall.
Joshua learns to cope with anger at his day care centre.

Also:

Jo, Flo and Yolanda. Triplets who keep their individuality.
Grown-ups cry too. Everybody cries sometimes.
Carlotta and the Scientist. A penguin gathering fish for her husband and baby sidetracks to adventure.
The Magic Hat. A myth about how some toys become "girl toys" and some "boy toys".



From Judith Bathie's *Alison and the Bear*, illus. Carol Pavey, published by the Women's Movement Children's Literature Co-operative.

NEW SEED PRESS
P.O. Box 3016,
Stanford, California 94305,
U.S.A.

Katims, Jane. *Mu's View.*
"A girl whose name was Mu decided what she'd like to do. She said, 'I'll just find a way to make a wonderful day.' "

Stickgold, Bob and Tibby. *Margo makes a Mess.*
Margo wants to make the biggest mess in the world.

SOJOURNER TRUTH PRESS

Vicki. *Sleeping Beauty.* illus. Gail.
A lesbian fairy tale, a bit too much like the old romance but still the only children's book about lesbians I've ever been able to find.

WOMEN'S MOVEMENT CHILDREN'S LITERATURE CO-OPERATIVE
C/- 62 Relowe Crescent,
Box Hill North, Melbourne.

The Women's Movement Children's Literature Co-operative is the group behind the publication of this booklist, but our main aim has been to write and publish countersexist children's books. Some we have published ourselves, some are being published as part of a series by Wren Press.

A. Published by the Women's Movement Children's Literature Co-operative.

Bathie, Judith. *Alison and the Bear.* illus. Carol Pavey.
There are more ways to catch a bear than by violence, but Alison needs a lot of courage just the same.

Bathie, Judith. *The Witch of Grange Grove.* illus. Isabel Wicca.
A witch comes to live in Grange Grove and the children's lives are changed before the adults complain and force her to move on.

Harper, Jan. *Girls can do anything.* illus. Isabel Wicca.
Three girls start off barracking, but decide they can do more by playing in the team.

Pausacker, Jenny. *Nicky.* illus. Rae Dale.
A small boy learns how to learn.

B. To be published by Wren in the Little Wren series which "hopes that the materials will not only help to balance the many different prejudices in social stereotyping — eg sex roles, racism, religion, socio-economic class — but also foster the positive qualities of tolerance, integrity and creativity." The estimated date of publication is September/October 1975. Books will be available in bookshops generally, or from Wren.

Bathie, Judith. *The Princess and the Painter.* illus. Judith Crabtree.
The princess is bored by playing, and enjoys the painter's work far more.

Crabtree, Judith. *Carolyn Two.* illus. Cressida Jolles.
Carolyn has two sides to her, one timid, one adventurous, but she manages to get them together.

Crabtree, Judith. *Emily Jane and the Grumphfs.* illus. Sue O'Bryan.
Emily Jane learns how to get back at the creatures who racket under her bed at night.

Crabtree, Judith. *The Highrise Gang.* written and illus.
A group of girls and boys from the high rise flats.

Crabtree, Judith. *Nicking off.* written and illus.
When a boy decides to run away to Sydney he doesn't expect to end up looking after a baby.

Harper, Jan. *The Potter Family.* illus. Judith Crabtree.
A family that works together. Father takes the baby for a walk, while daughter saves the pots.

Harper, Jan. *What Parents Do.* illus. Vicki Nelson.
Children learn what they can do from what they see their parents doing.

Lilith, Robyn. *What Children Do.* illus. Tony Figallo.
Photographs of children around the place.

Lilith, Robyn. *To B or not to B.* illus, Tony Figallo.
An alphabetical fantasy.

Pausacker, Jenny. *The Three Dragons.* illus. Rae Dale.
Jane skips school and meets three women dragons who teach her how to breathe fire.

HOW TO GET HOLD OF THESE BOOKS

My own personal advice is, "Order them from your local library." If the library has the book you want, you can reserve it. If the book is in another library they'll send it over for you. If it isn't in the library they 'll put it on order, and then when you've read it it's available to everyone else in the area. It may take a bit of time, but unless you are prepared to wait for your countersexist books, you'll be back with the Little Golden Books and Armada paperbacks again. Books have fallen into the general pattern of mass production: if you want a particular title, not just "a book", you're swimming against the tide.

If you want to buy a particular book (and I admit that sometimes there are reasons to buy books), you'll probably have to order it as most bookshops don't hold stock for very long. You might be lucky at the Little Bookroom, 15 Equitable Place, Melbourne — also Toorak, South Yarra and Camberwell — which is solely a children's bookshop. Otherwise place your order through any bookshop, preferably one where you are a valued customer, and wait, ringing them up at intervals. All the books on the list with the exception of the books by feminist groups have been at some stage available in Melbourne. Wherever there is any particular place to go to for a book I have indicated that in the text.

Good luck.

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This is not a complete bibliography; it's a start for anyone who wants to read further. *Sexism and Youth*, edited by Diane Gersoni-Stavn, is the best single text on the subject, and contains many of the articles I have cited separately. *Ms* and *Spare Rib* have on-going reviews or articles on children's books.

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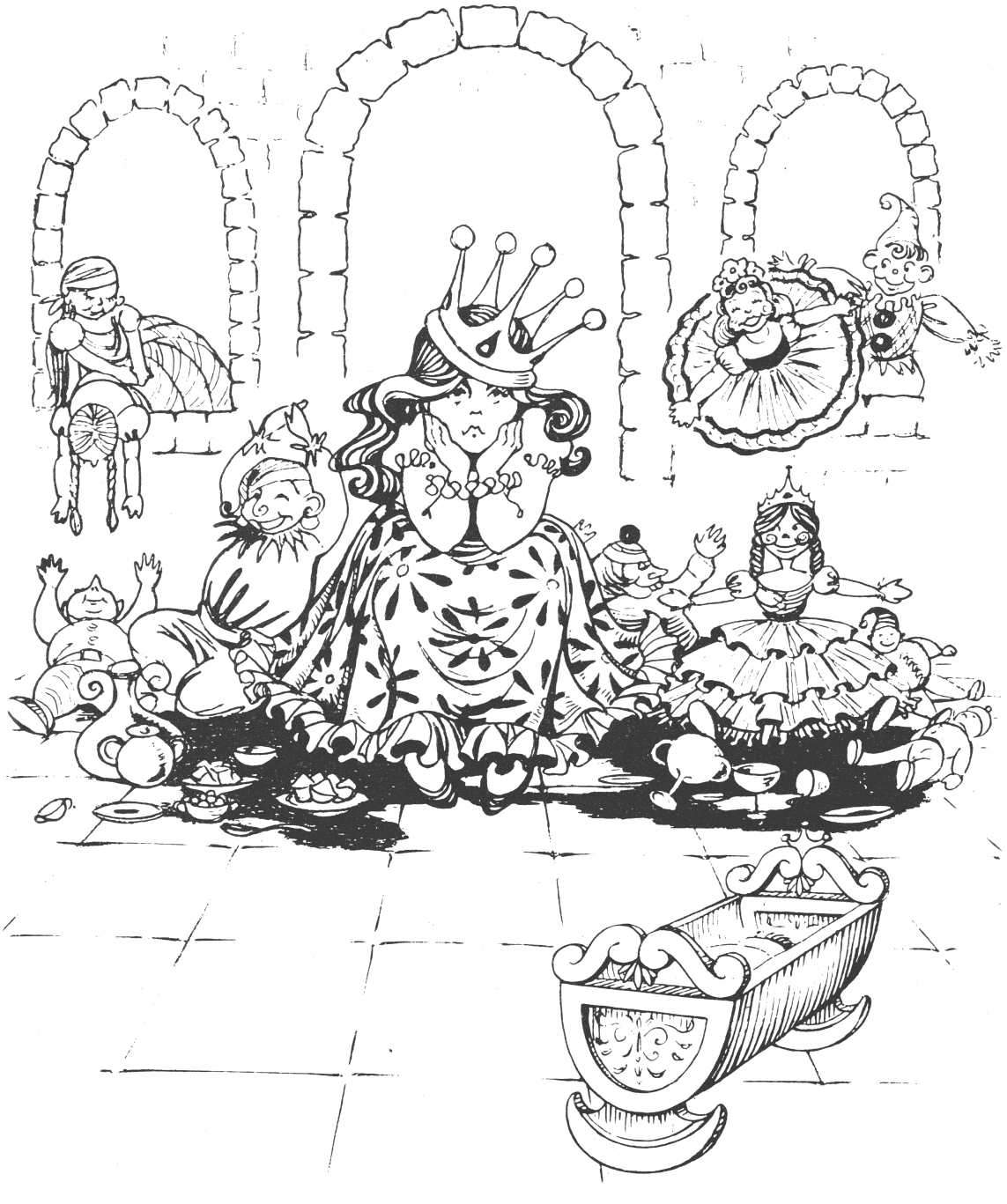

From Judith Bathie's *The Princess and the Painter*, illus. Judith Crabtree, published by Wren.